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MARVEL® COMICS GROUP



THE LIFE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

THE ENTIRE STORY!

FROM HIS CHILDHOOD IN
POLAND TO THE
ASSASSINATION ATTEMPT!



MARVEL COMICS PRESENTS
THE LIFE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

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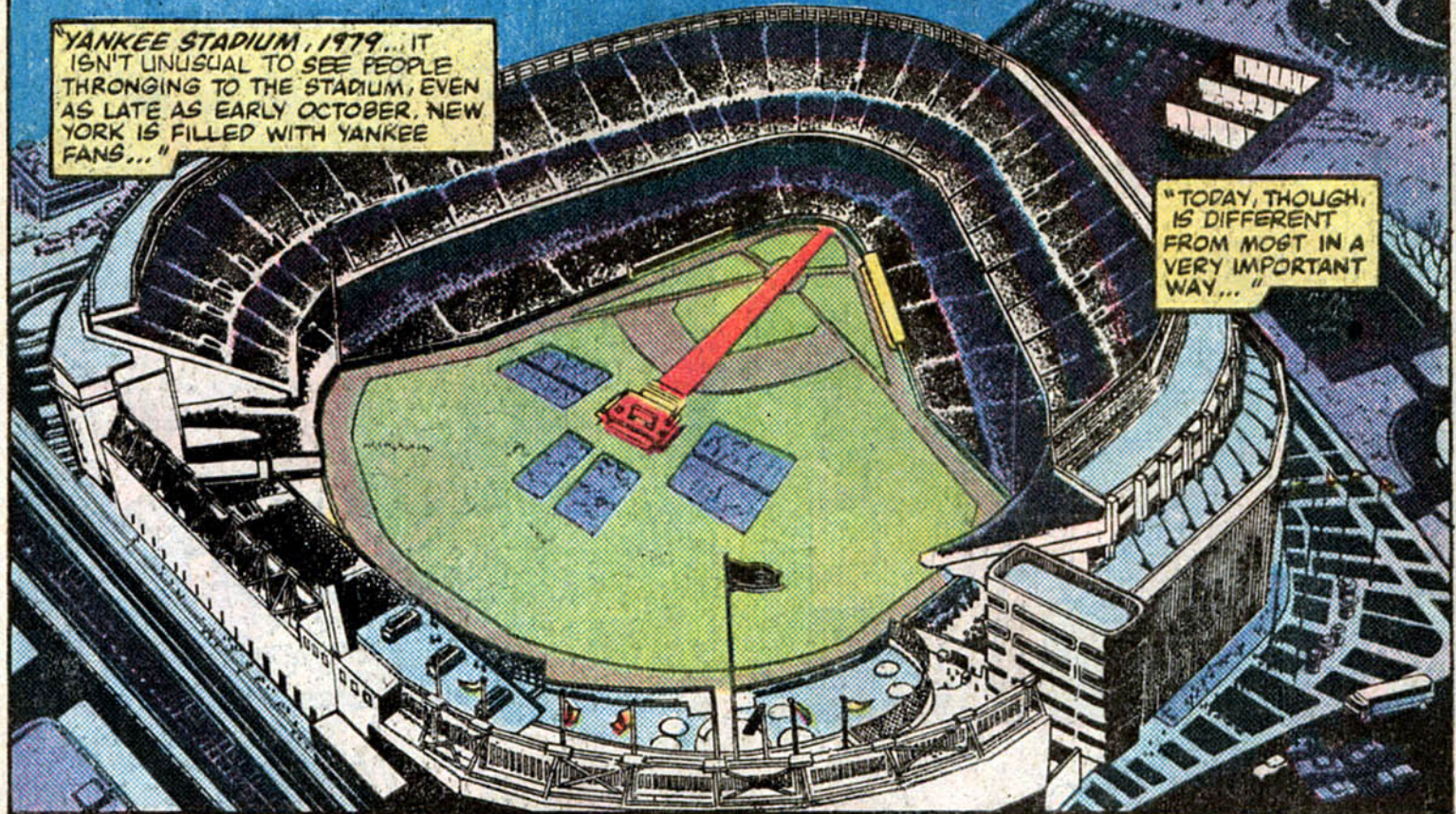
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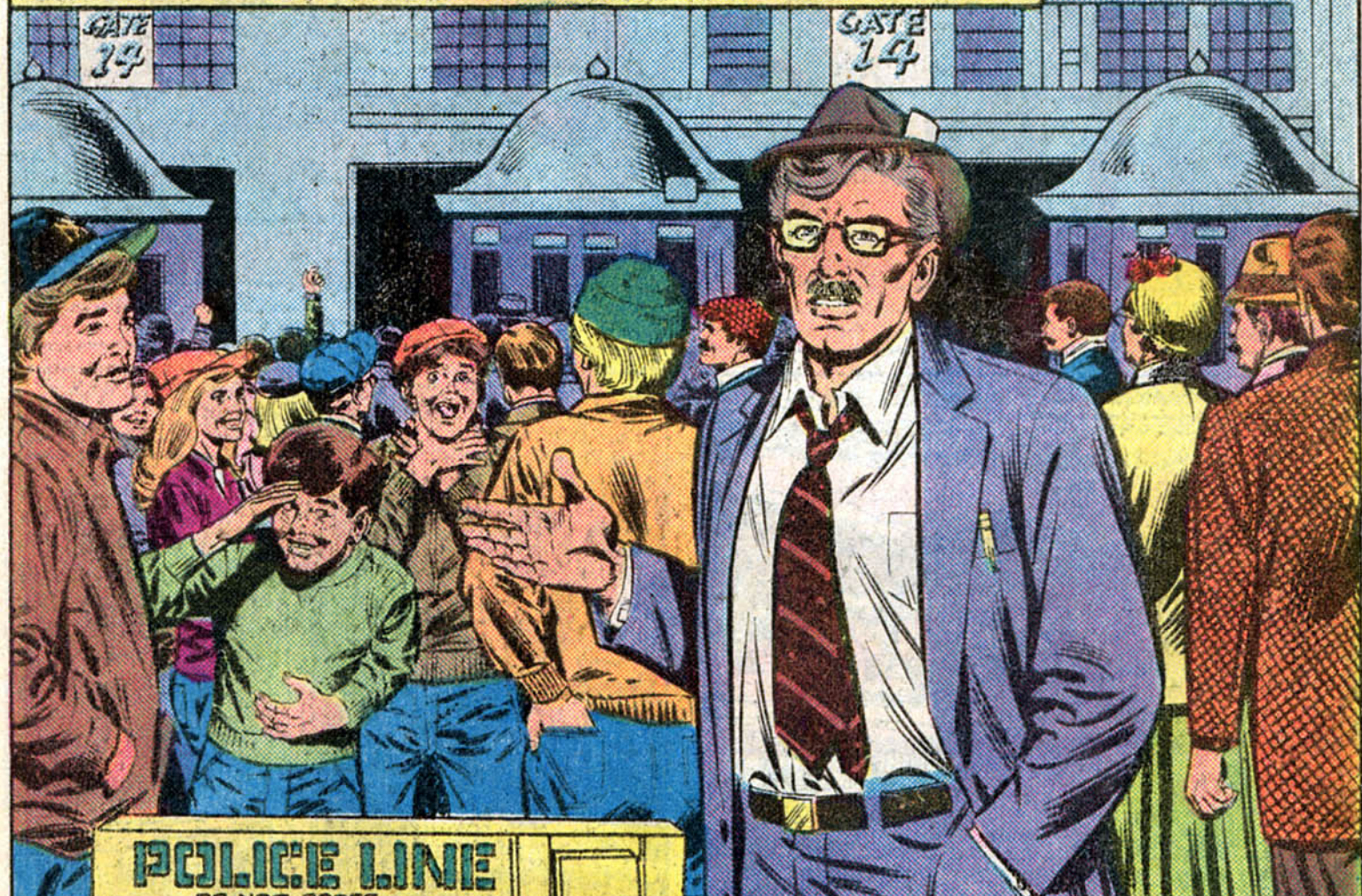
THE LIFE OF POPE JOHN PAUL II

"YANKEE STADIUM, 1979... IT ISN'T UNUSUAL TO SEE PEOPLE THRONING TO THE STADIUM, EVEN AS LATE AS EARLY OCTOBER. NEW YORK IS FILLED WITH YANKEE FANS..."

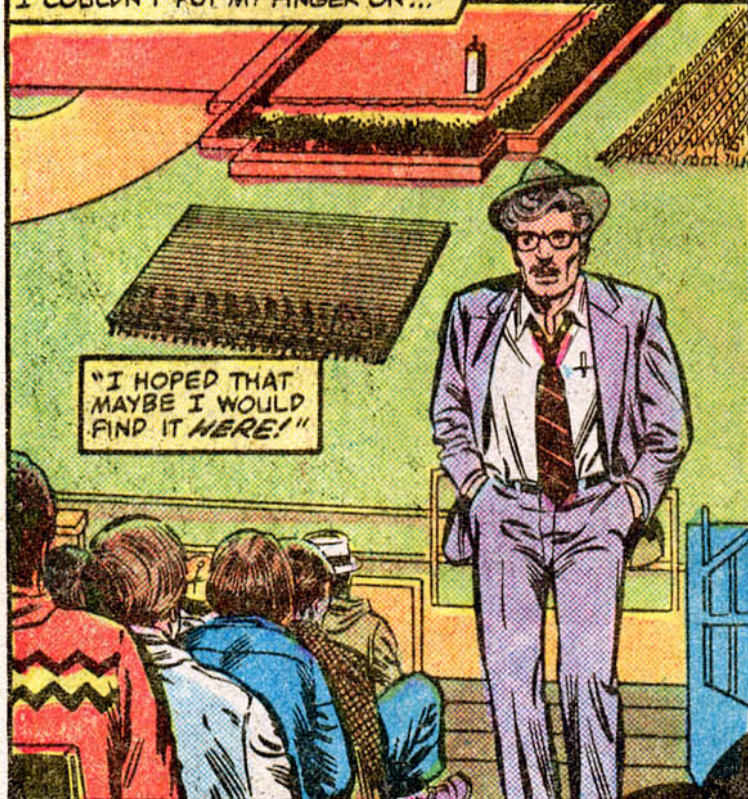
"TODAY, THOUGH, IS DIFFERENT FROM MOST IN A VERY IMPORTANT WAY..."



"THESE PEOPLE--MORE THAN I COULD COUNT AND OF A GREATER VARIETY THAN I HAD EXPECTED-- AREN'T HERE FOR ANY BASEBALL GAME. THEY ARE HERE TO SEE POPE JOHN PAUL II!"



"MY EDITOR HAD LIKED MY STORIES ON THE POPE--HIS BACKGROUND, HIS TOUR OF THE UNITED STATES SO FAR. I WASN'T SATISFIED. THERE WAS SOMETHING *MISSING* FROM MY PORTRAIT OF POPE JOHN PAUL II, SOMETHING I COULDN'T PUT MY FINGER ON..."

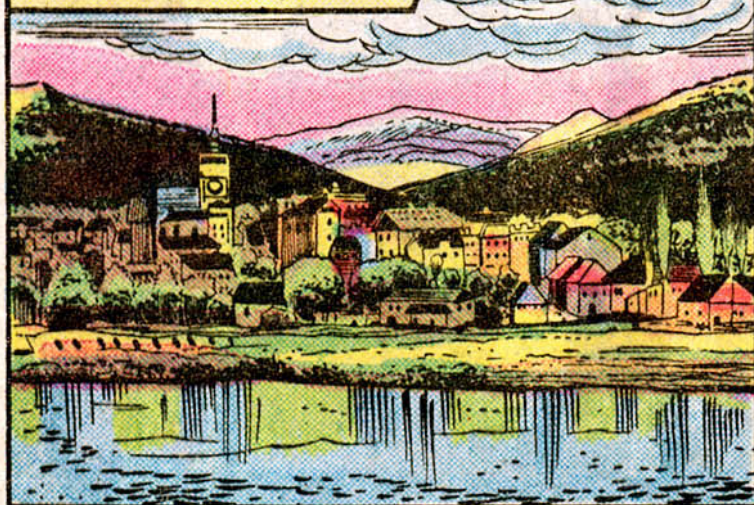


"I GLANCED IN ANGER AT THE TOUGHS! I KNEW THEIR TYPE--HOODLUMS WHO COME NOT TO LISTEN BUT TO JEER AND TO DISRUPT... WHAT CONNECTION COULD THE POPE HAVE WITH THE LIKES OF THEM?"



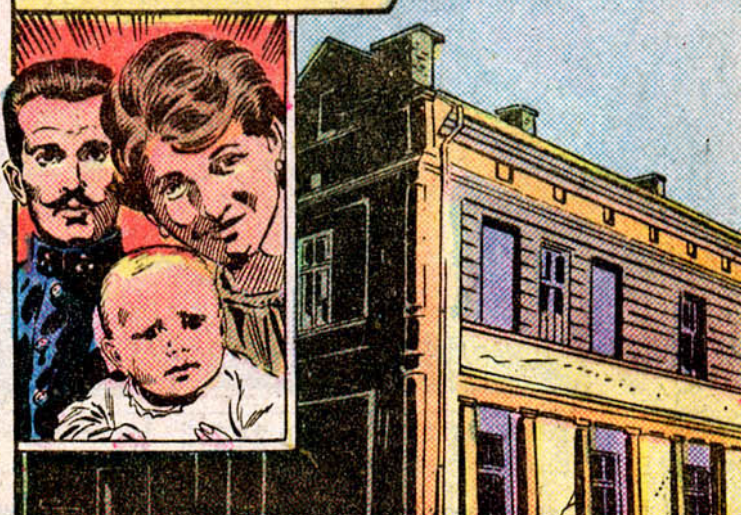
"AND, SITTING THERE, I THOUGHT PERHAPS I COULD ANSWER THAT QUESTION AND ALL MY OTHERS... THAT PERHAPS THAT MISSING ELEMENT MIGHT BE ALREADY IN MY GRASP, IF I ONLY WENT OVER MY FACTS ONCE MORE..."

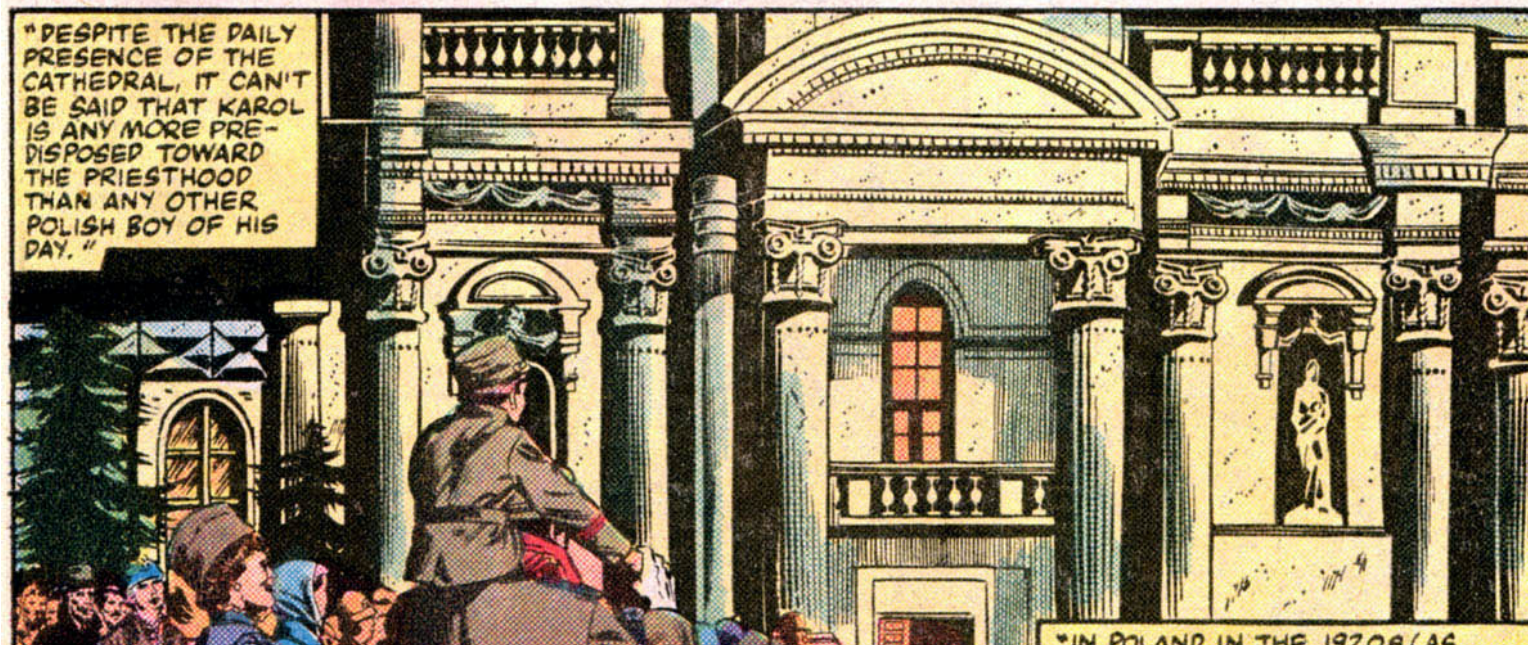
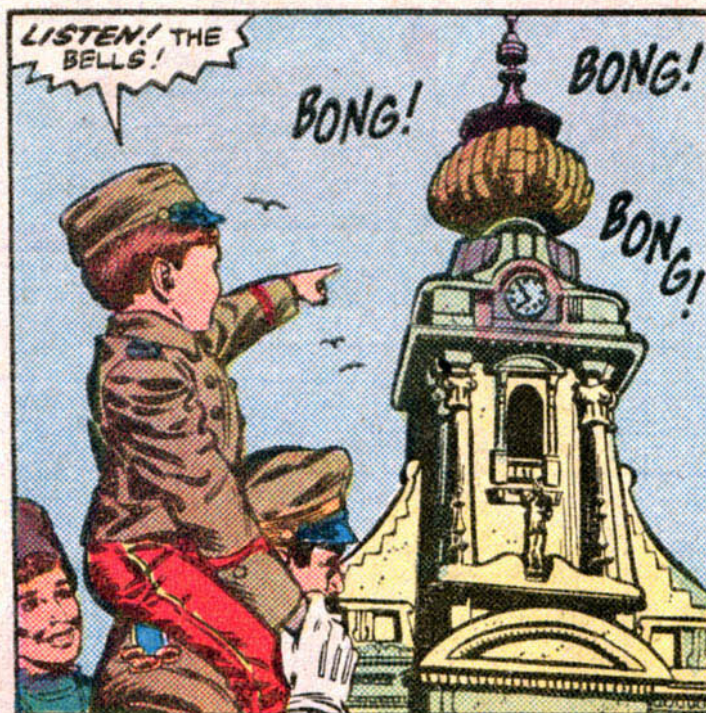
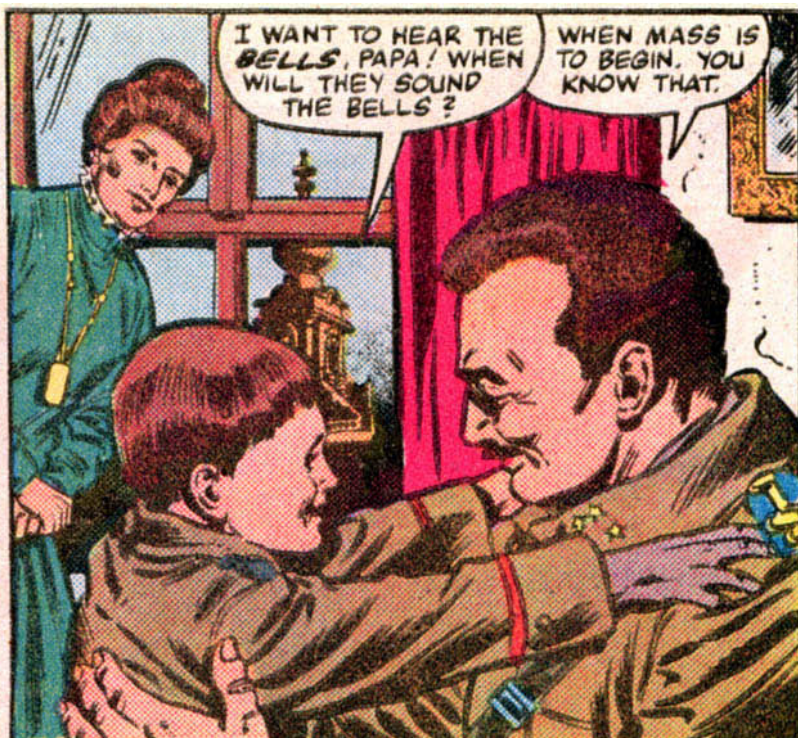
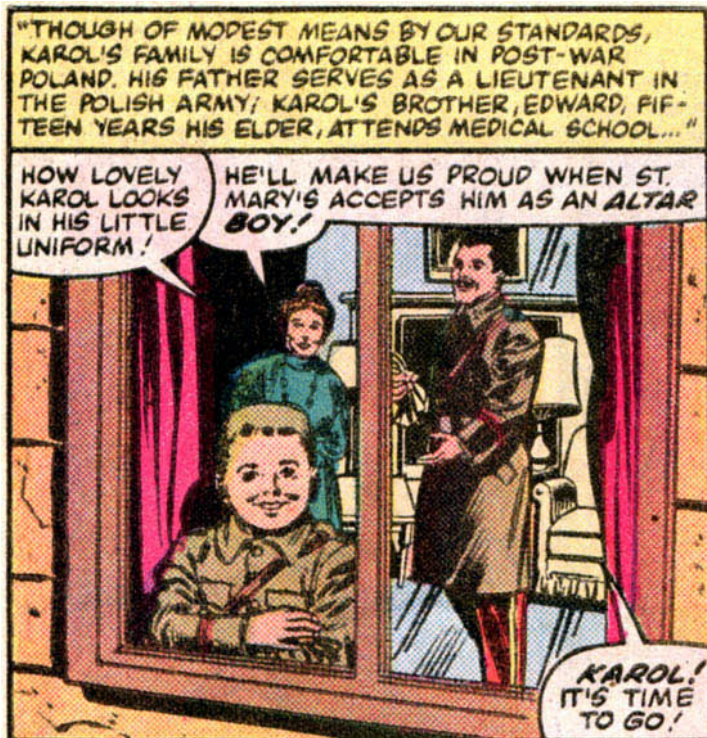
"WADOWICE, POLAND, 1920..."

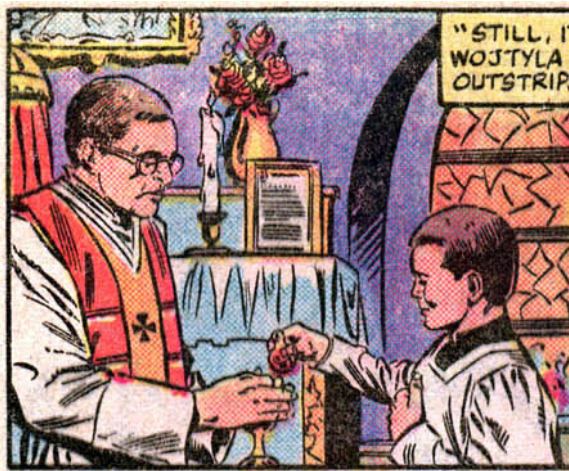


"IT IS TWO YEARS AFTER THE FIRST WORLD WAR, AND POLAND, A LAND HELD IN CAPTIVITY FOR 123 YEARS, IS AT LAST FREE OF OUTSIDE CONTROL. MOST RECENTLY,

"IT IS HERE THAT KAROL WOJTYLA -- WHO WILL GROW UP TO BE POPE-- IS BORN, IN THE SHADOW OF THE 600-YEAR-OLD CATHEDRAL OF ST. MARY IN THE TOWN OF WADOWICE..."

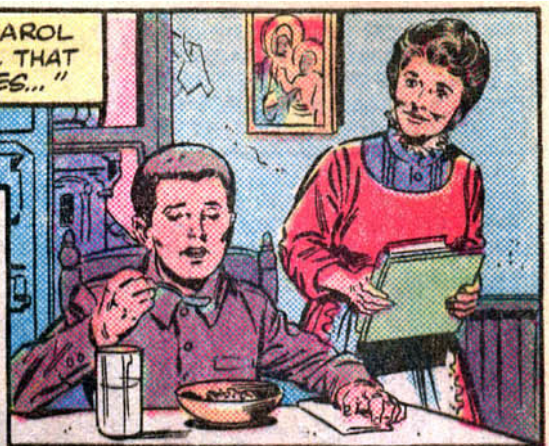
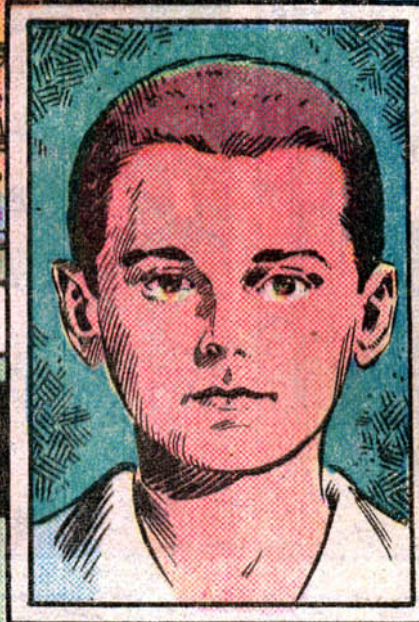




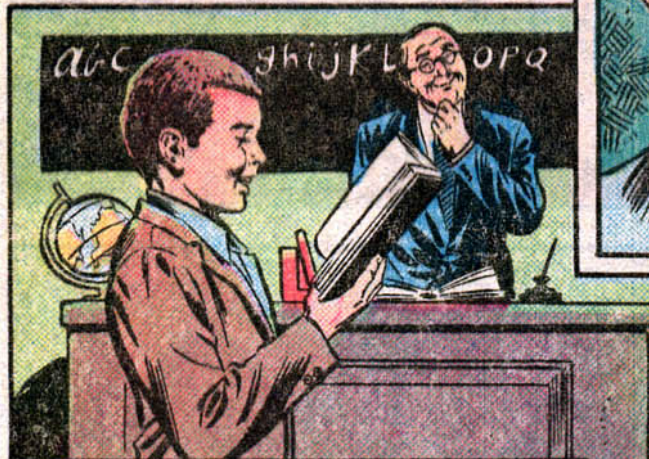


"THIS IS HIS DAILY LIFE... RISING BEFORE DAWN TO SERVE AT THE MASS..."

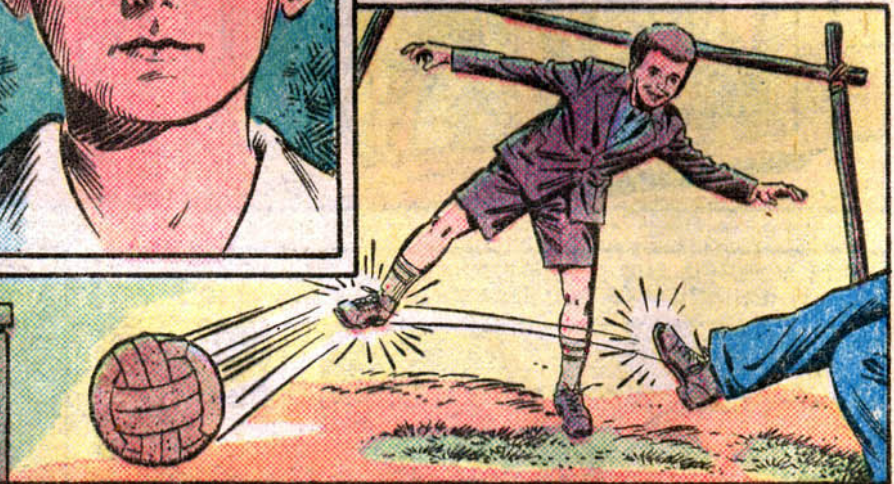
"STILL, IT CAN BE SAID THAT AS A BOY, KAROL WOJTYLA APPROACHES LIFE WITH A ZEAL THAT OUTSTRIPS MANY OF HIS CONTEMPORARIES..."



"WITH SCANT TIME TO SPARE BETWEEN MASS AND SCHOOL, HE DASHES HOME FOR A QUICK BREAKFAST..."



"IN SCHOOL, HE LEARNS WITH A PASSION, THAT QUICKLY BRINGS HIM TO THE ATTENTION OF HIS TEACHERS, A PASSION THAT WILL LAST THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE..."

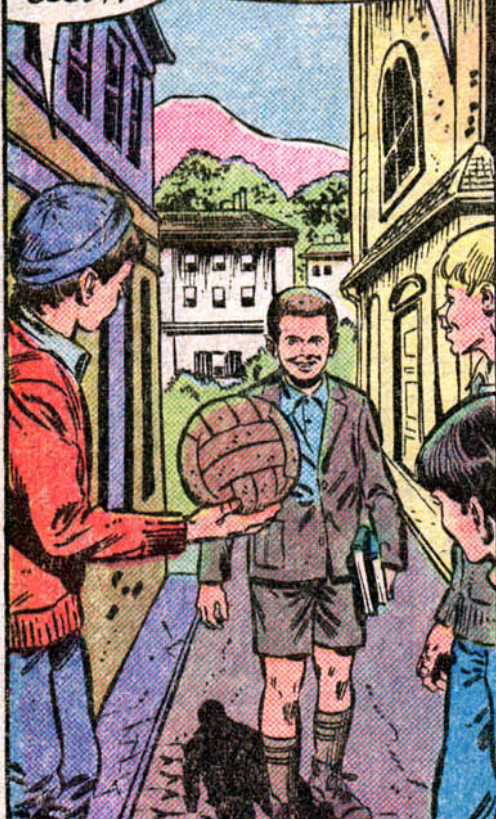


"YET NOWHERE IS HIS ZEST FOR LIFE SO EVIDENT THAN IN THE SPORTS HE LOVES. BUT THE STRICT SCHEDULE GIVEN HIM BY HIS FATHER LEAVES HIM LITTLE MORE TIME, THAN AN HOUR AFTER SCHOOL MOST NIGHTS, FOR THESE PURSUITS..."

"IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT KAROL'S DISCIPLINE DID NOT ESCAPE THE NOTICE OF HIS SCHOOLMATES..."

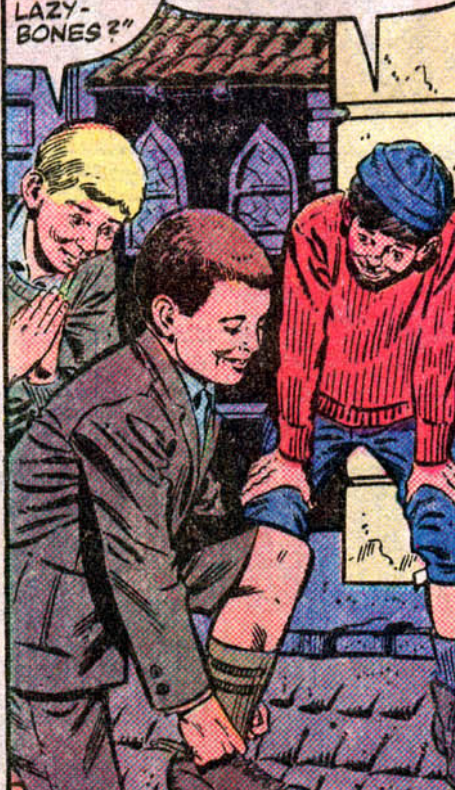
HERE COMES WOJTYLA, THE GOODY-GOODY!

WHY DO YOU HAVE TO BE SUCH A GOOD KID, HUH?



YEAH! MY FATHER SAYS, "KAROL WOJTYLA GETS UP AT 5:30 TO SERVE MASS! WHY ARE YOU SUCH A LAZY-BONES?"

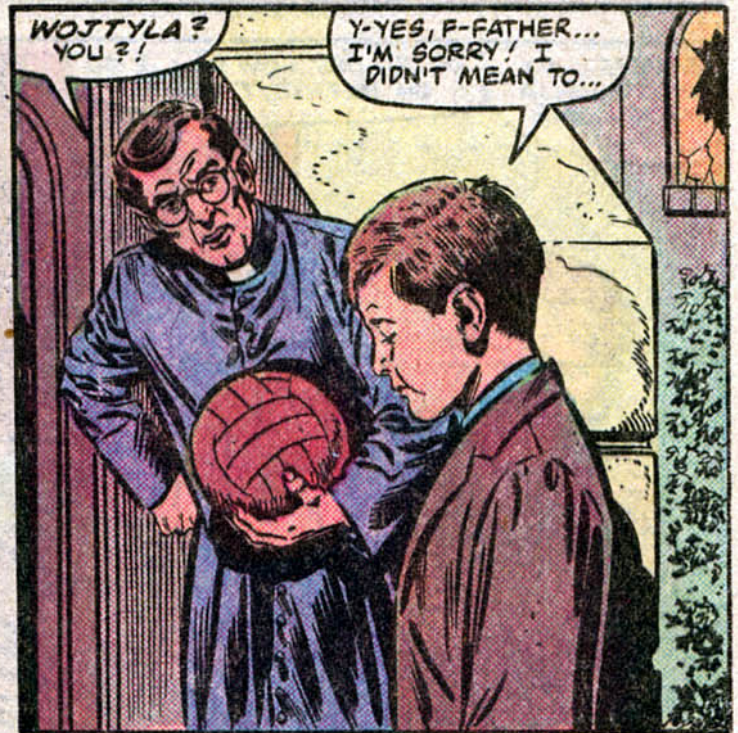
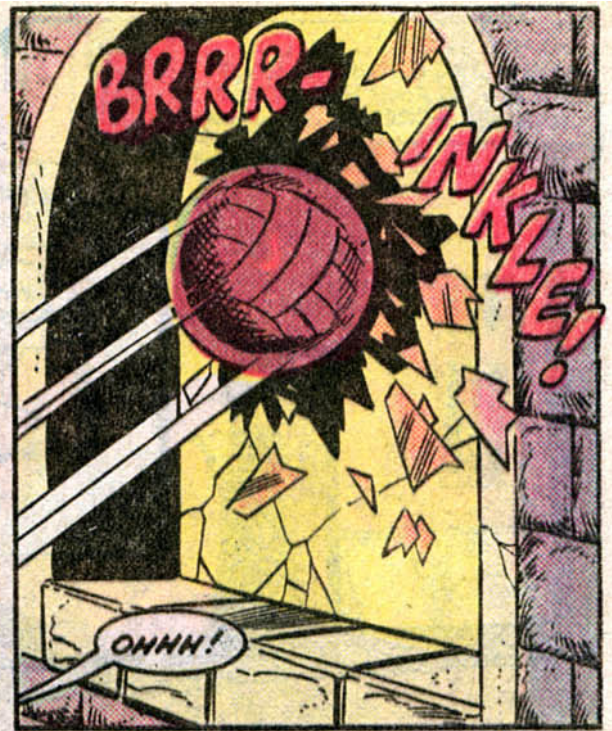
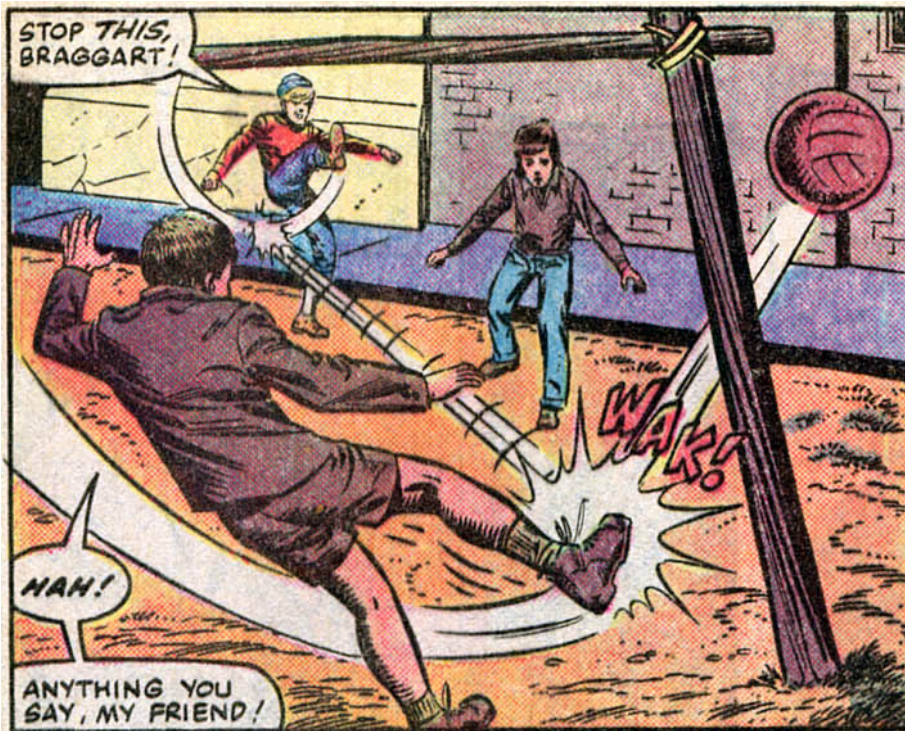
MINE SAYS, "WHEN OTHER BOYS DON'T SHOW UP, KAROL SERVES AT ALL THE ALTARS IN ST. MARY'S! WHY CAN'T YOU BE MORE LIKE KAROL?"

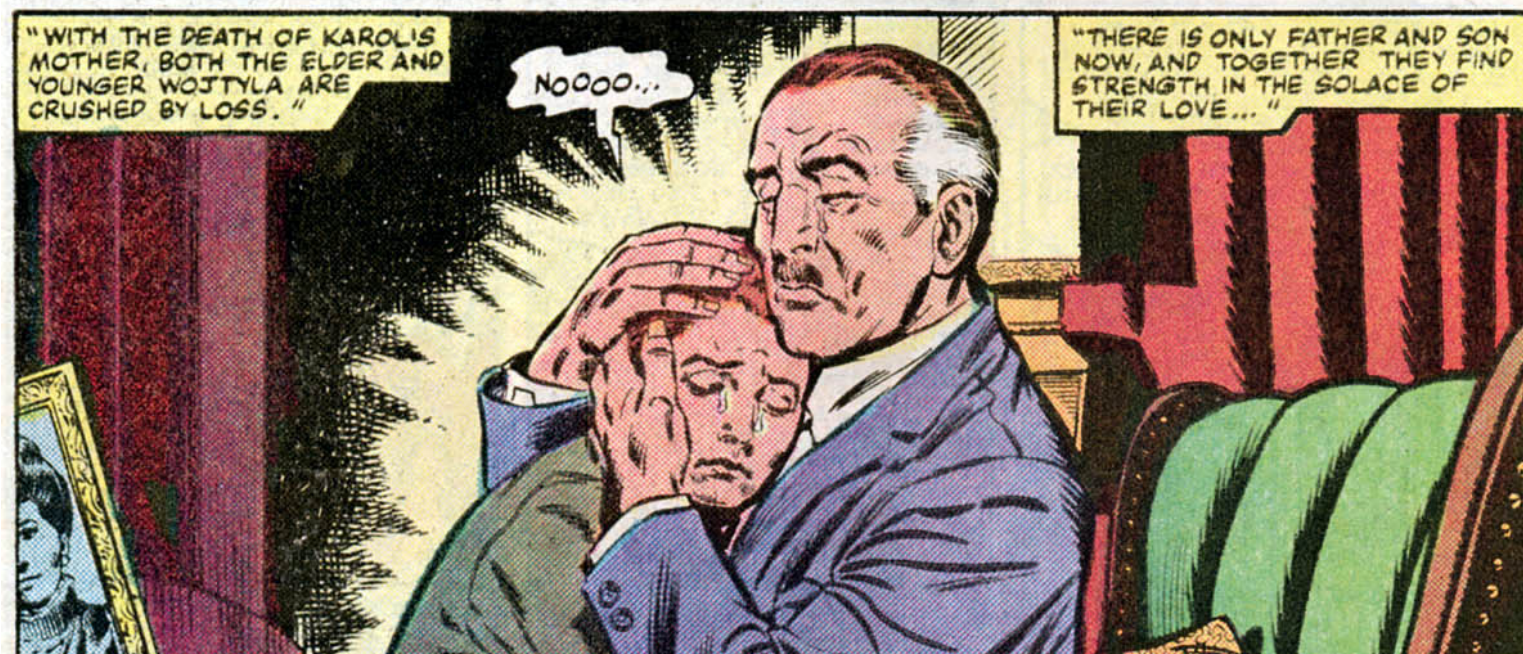
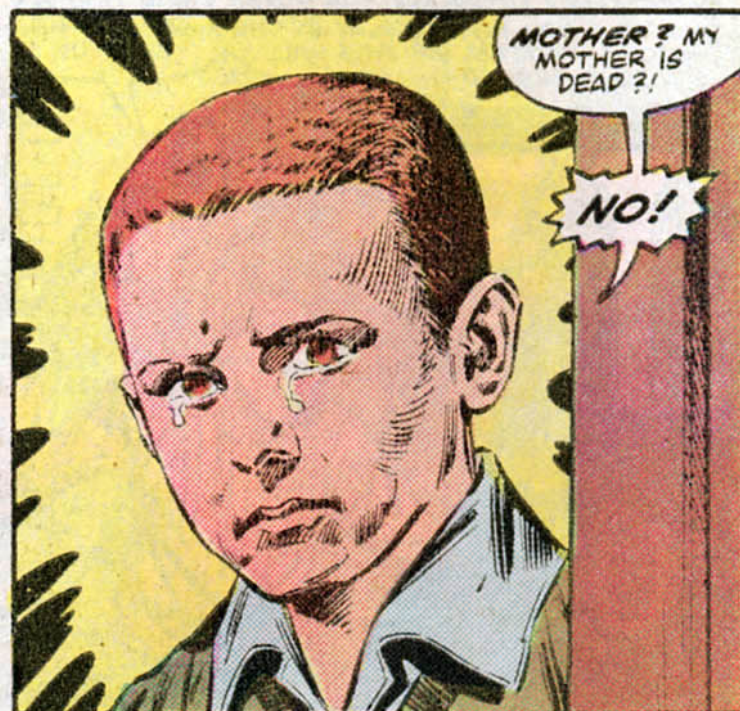
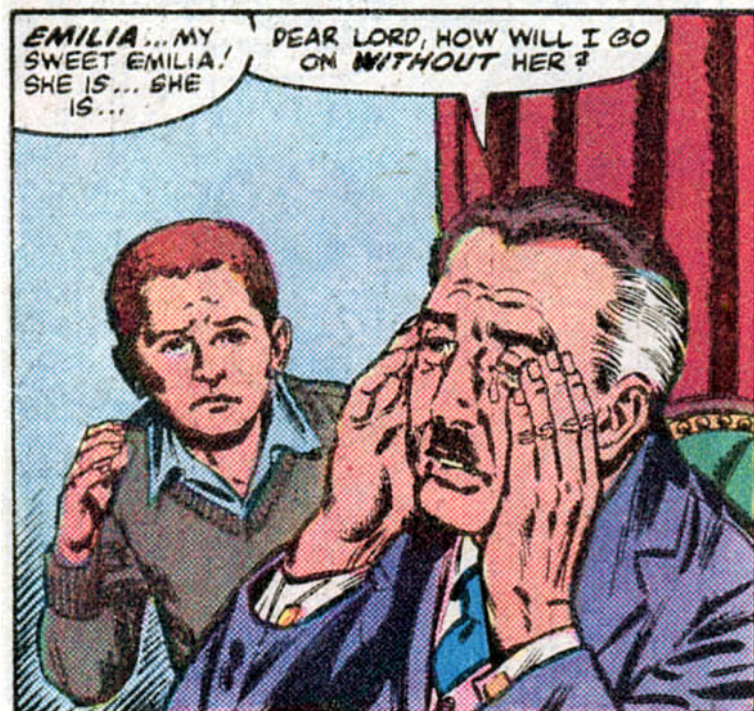
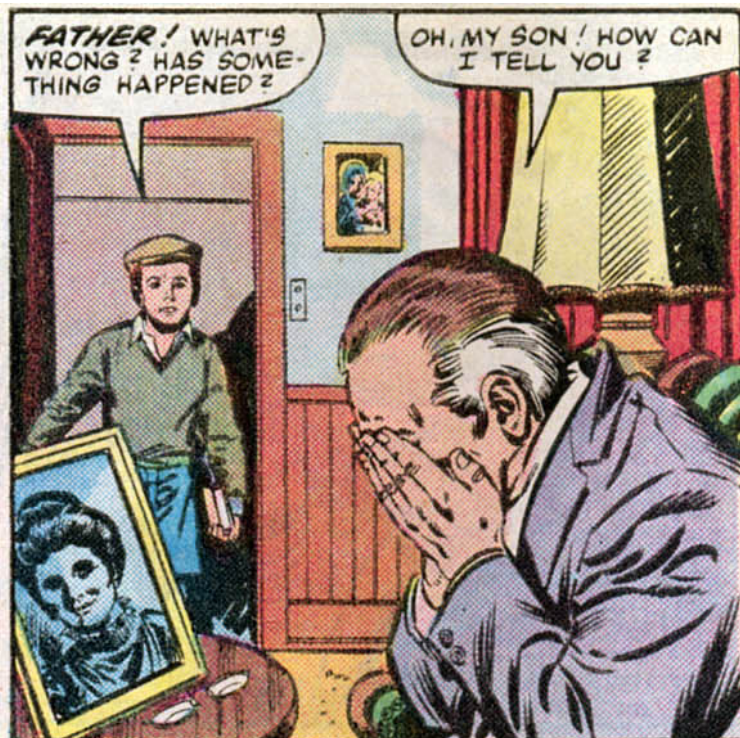
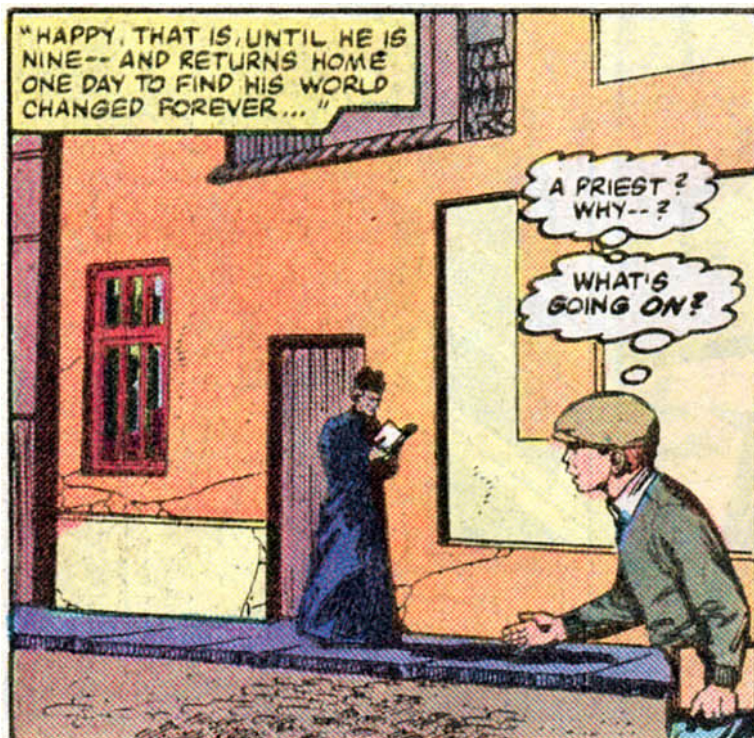


ARE YOU TRYING TO MAKE US LOOK BAD, KAROL?

I WILL MAKE YOU LOOK BAD--IF YOU TRY TO SCORE A POINT WHILE I'M GOALIE!

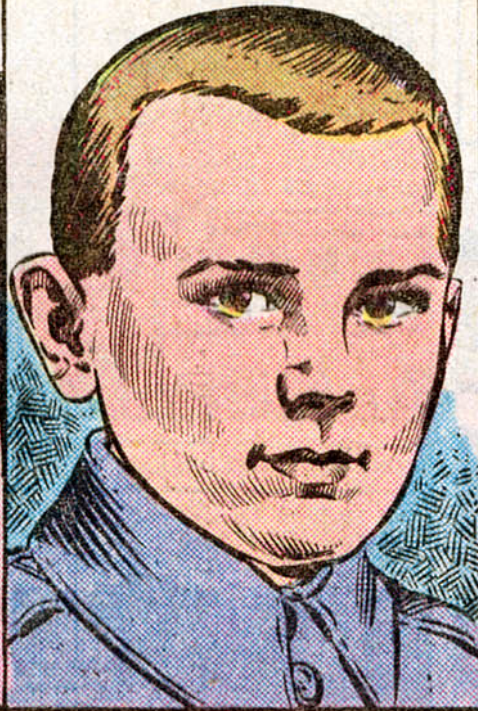




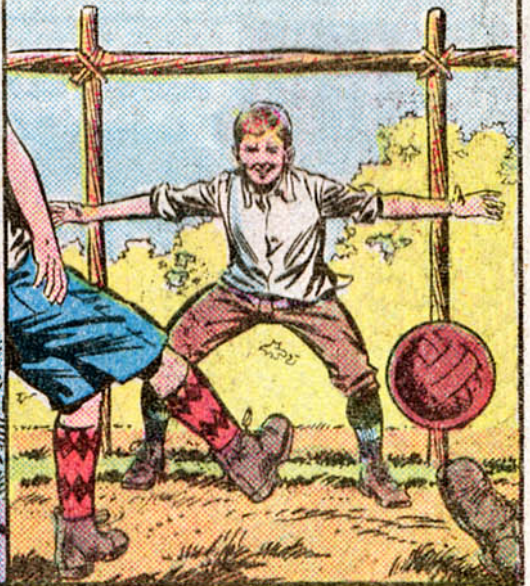


"THOUGH THE BITTERNESS OF HIS LOSS STAYS WITH KAROL FOR A LONG TIME, HE SOMEHOW RETURNS HIS LIFE TO NORMAL..."

"HE CONTINUES WITH HIS STUDIES, AND WORKS FOR THE CHURCH!"

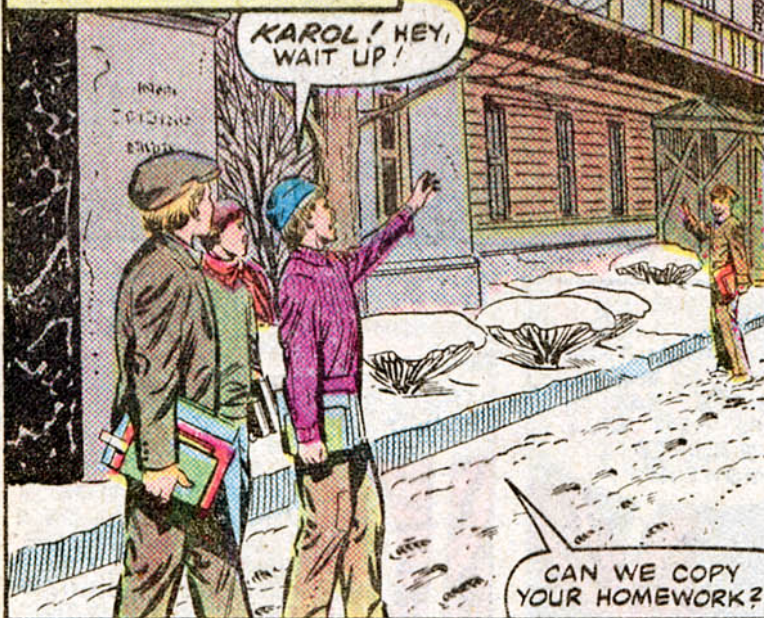


"AND, LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE HURT OF HIS MOTHER'S DEATH DIMINISHES --AND HIS NATURAL HUMOR AND OPTIMISM RETURN..."



"BY THE AGE OF 11, KAROL'S REPUTATION--AT LEAST AMONG HIS TEACHERS AND FELLOW STUDENTS IN WADOWICE--IS SECURE..."

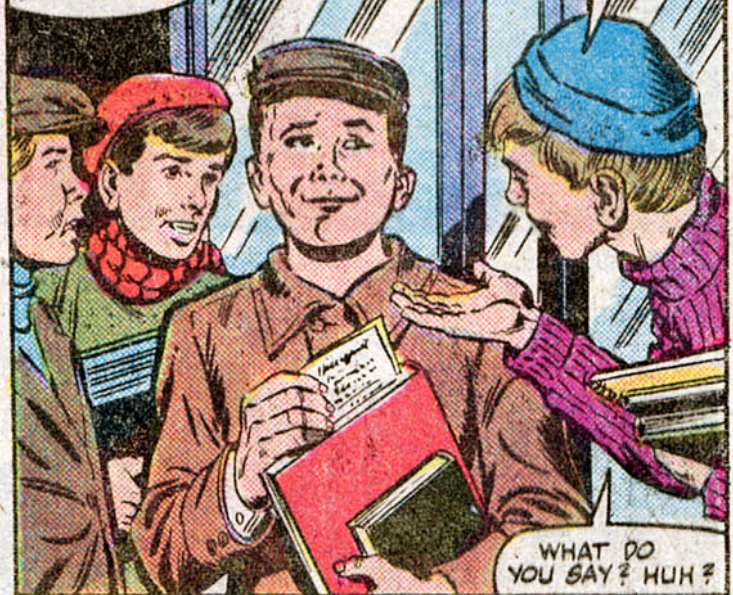
KAROL! HEY, WAIT UP!



CAN WE COPY YOUR HOMEWORK?

WE GOT BUSY WITH A GAME LAST NIGHT, YOU KNOW?

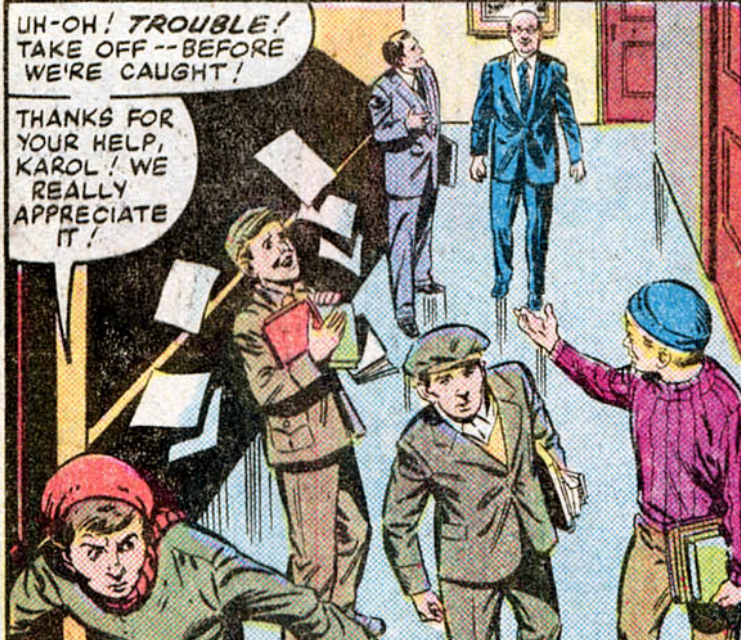
"DON'T WORRY," I SAID, "KAROL WILL HAVE HIS WORK DONE--AND DONE RIGHT! WE'LL GET IT FROM HIM!"



WHAT DO YOU SAY? HUH?

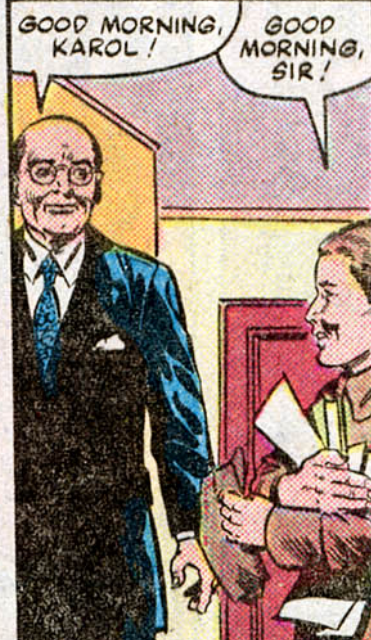
UH-OH! TROUBLE! TAKE OFF--BEFORE WE'RE CAUGHT!

THANKS FOR YOUR HELP, KAROL! WE REALLY APPRECIATE IT!



GOOD MORNING, KAROL!

GOOD MORNING, SIR!



AN EXCELLENT STUDENT, THAT WOJTYLA!

MARK MY WORDS! WITH HIS BRAINS, HE'LL BE SOMEONE SOMEDAY!



"WHEN KAROL IS 12, DISASTER AGAIN VISITS HIS FAMILY-- HIS BROTHER EDWARD, NOW A DOCTOR, DIES OF SCARLET FEVER. KAROL'S REACTION TO DEATH AT THIS AGE IS SOMEWHAT DIFFERENT THAN BEFORE..."



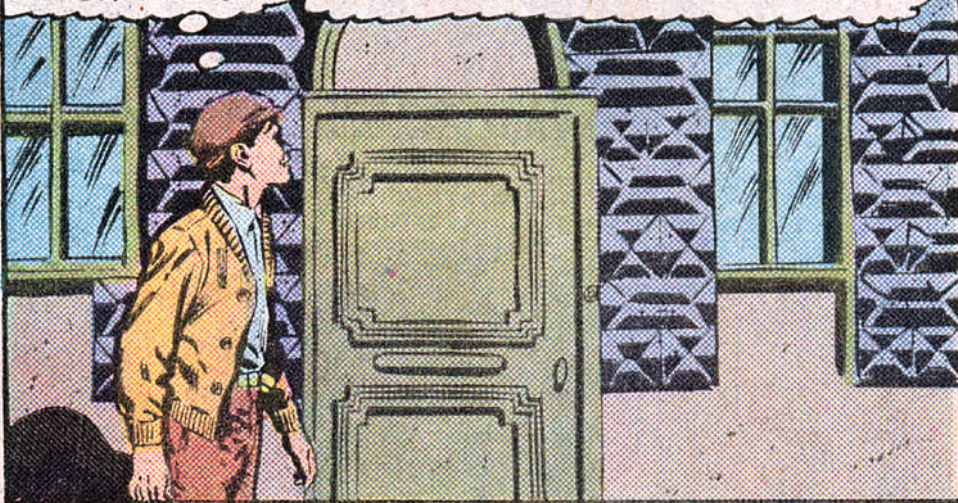
DO NOT BE SAD, PAPA! THIS IS GOD'S WILL!

"YET, HIS BROTHER'S DEATH MAY HAVE AFFECTED KAROL MORE THAN HE EXPRESSES! SOON AFTERWARD, HE TAKES TO WANDERING THE STREETS OF WADOWICE, LOST IN SPELLS OF LONELINESS..."



"ONE OF THESE WALKS WILL TAKE HIM NEARER HIS DESTINY..."

SO THIS IS THE HOME OF THE FAMILY KOTLARCZYK! THEY WERE FRIENDS OF EDWARD! THEIR INVITATION FOR ME TO VISIT WAS KIND... I HOPE I'M NOT INTERRUPTING ANYTHING!



PARDON ME! I KNOCKED, BUT NO ONE SEEMED TO HEAR-- OH!

LOOK OUT WHERE YOU'RE WALKING, YOU YOUNG FOOL!



WHAT DO YOU DO HERE? EDWARD NEVER TOLD ME...

WE ARE MAKING BACKDROPS FOR PLAYS FROM TISSUE PAPER, AS ANYONE CAN SEE! BACKDROPS THAT YOU HAVE RUINED, I MIGHT ADD!

BUT... WHY?

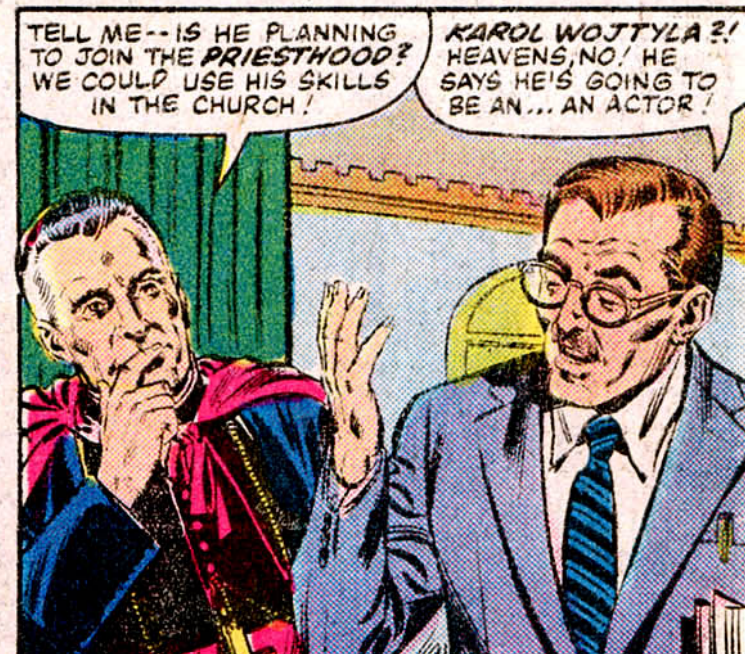
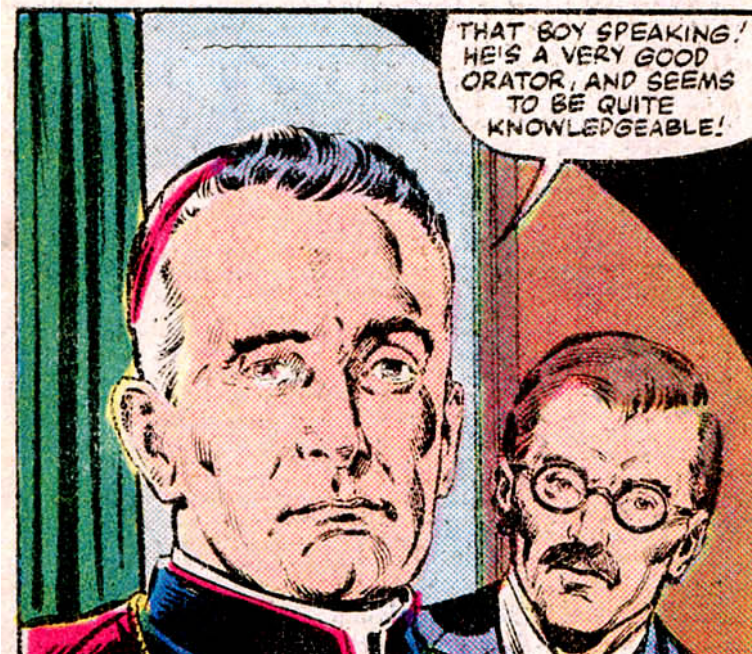
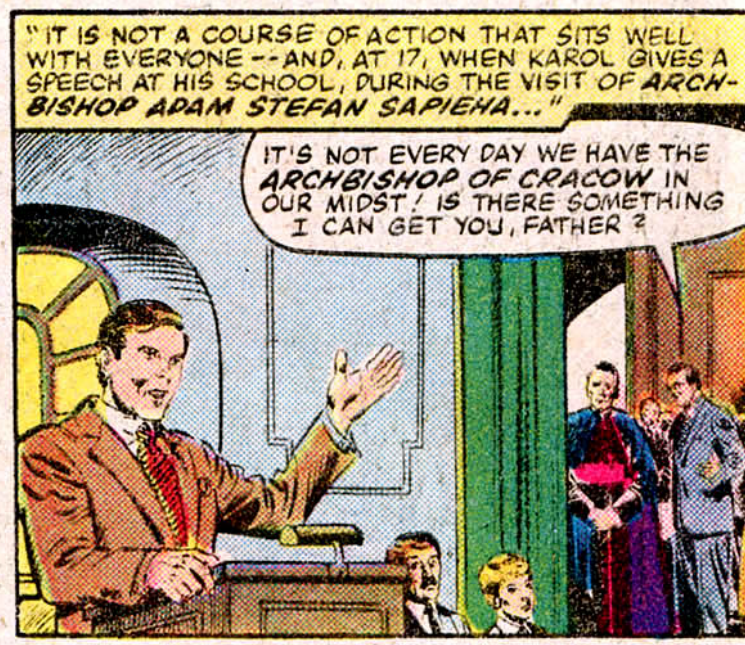
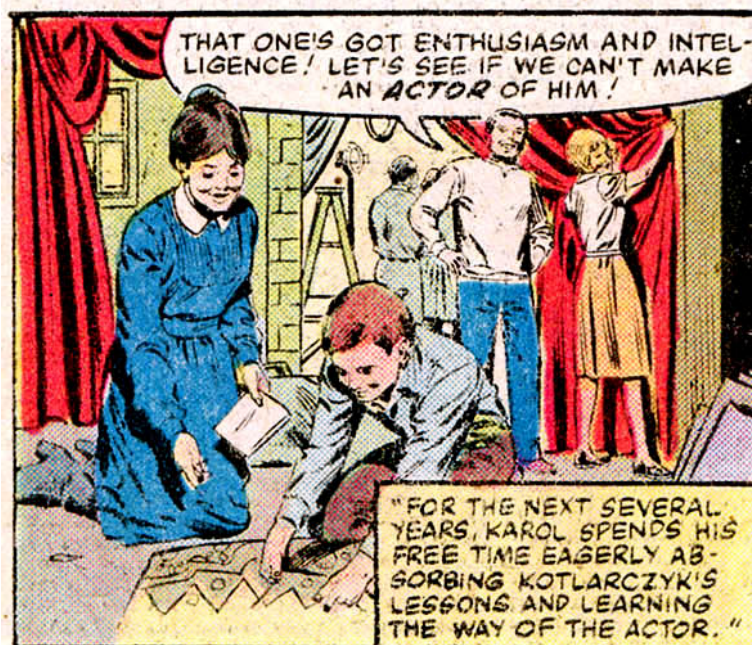
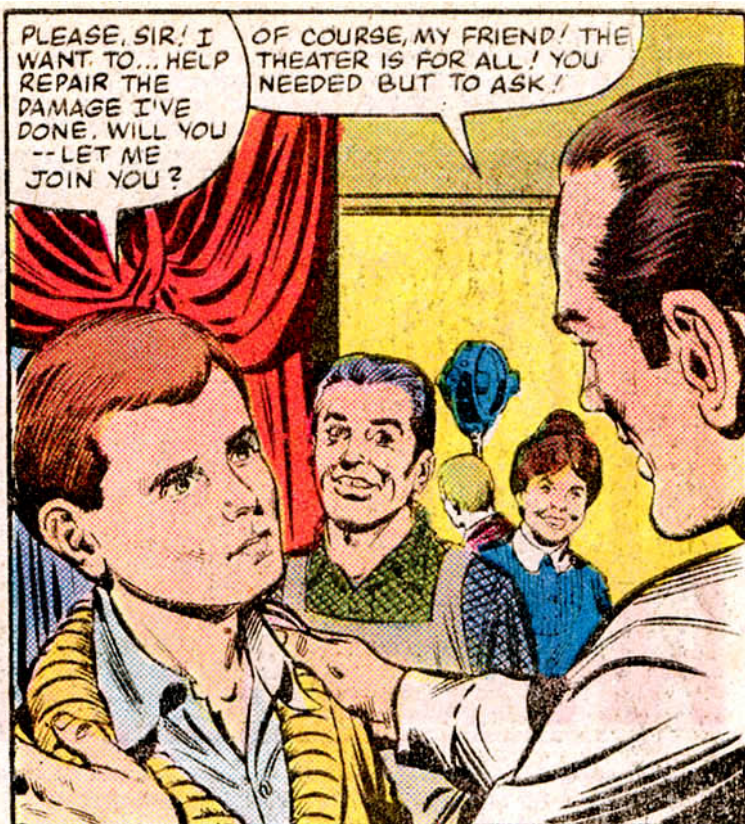
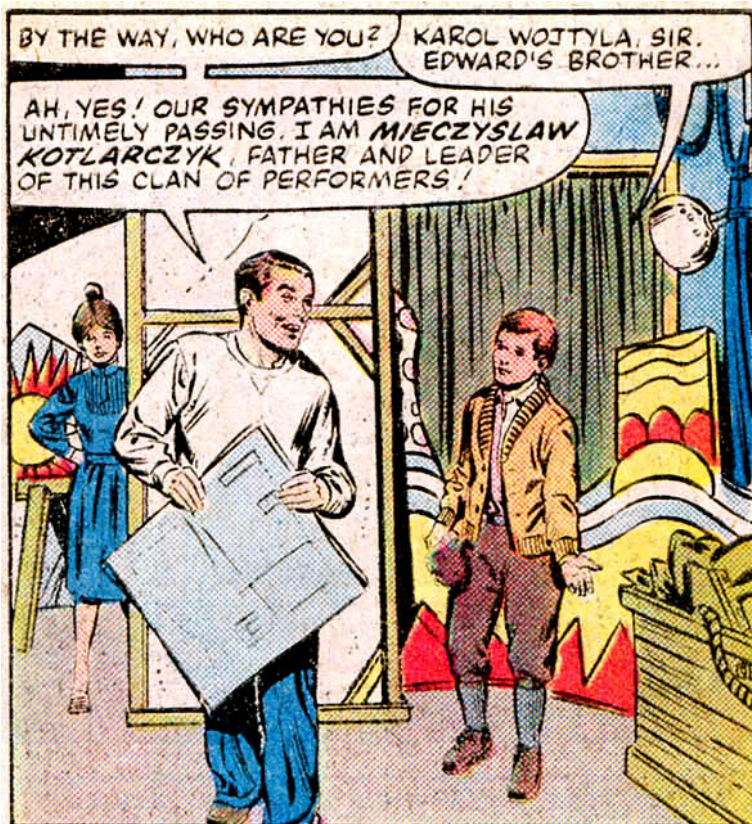


WHY?! WE ARE ACTORS! DON'T YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE THEATER?!

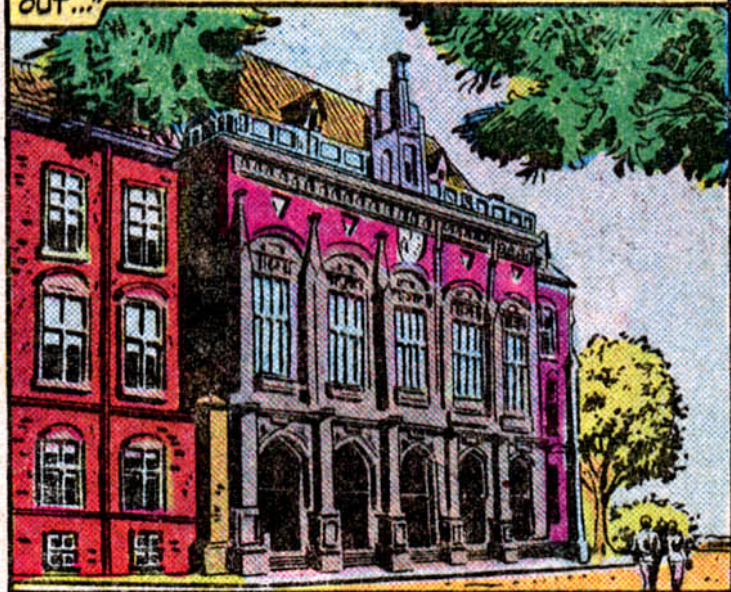
NOT REALLY...

THEN YOU MUST LEARN, AS ALL YOUNG PEOPLE SHOULD! FOR THEATER IS NOT MERELY ACTORS ON A STAGE, BUT A MEANS OF TOUCHING THE HEARTS AND MINDS OF HUMANITY-- AND BRINGING ABOUT THE IMPROVEMENT AND ENLIGHTENMENT OF THE HUMAN RACE!

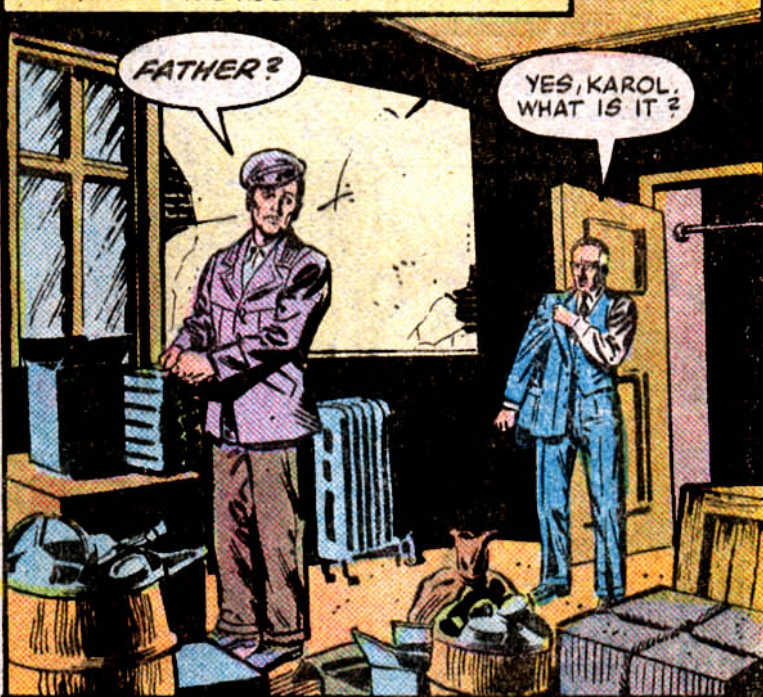




"AS KAROL'S HIGH SCHOOL DAYS END, SO DOES HIS LIFE IN WADOWICE, TO CONTINUE HIS STUDIES, HE MUST GO TO UNIVERSITY-- AND, FOR KAROL, THAT MEANS THE FAMED *JAGIELLONIAN* IN CRACOW, WHERE COPERNICUS TURNED THE UNIVERSE INSIDE OUT..."



"AND, INSIDE THE HOUSE IN WADOWICE..."

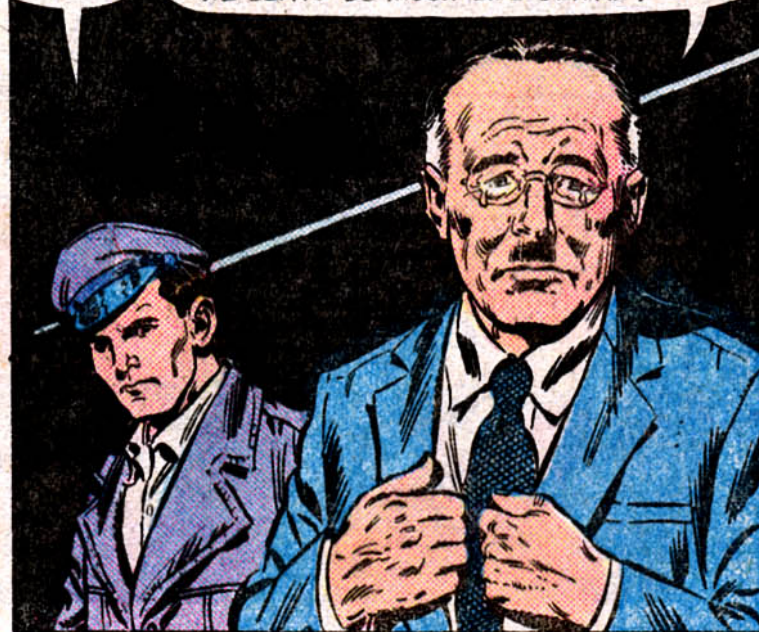


FATHER?

YES, KAROL. WHAT IS IT?

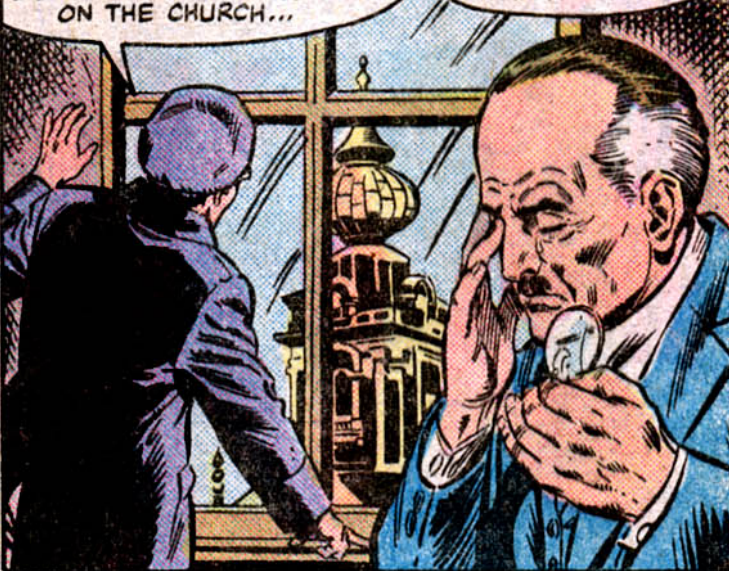
IT'S TIME. ARE YOU... READY?

TO LEAVE, YOU MEAN? I DON'T KNOW... SO MUCH LIFE HAS BEEN LIVED IN THIS HOUSE... MEMORIES GOOD AND BAD. HOW DO WE LEAVE SO MUCH LIFE BEHIND?



I KNOW, I REMEMBER WHEN I FIRST HEARD THE CHURCH BELLS... I SOMETIMES FEEL THAT MY LIFE BEGAN ONLY THEN! AND I'LL MISS THAT OLD SUNDIAL ON THE CHURCH...

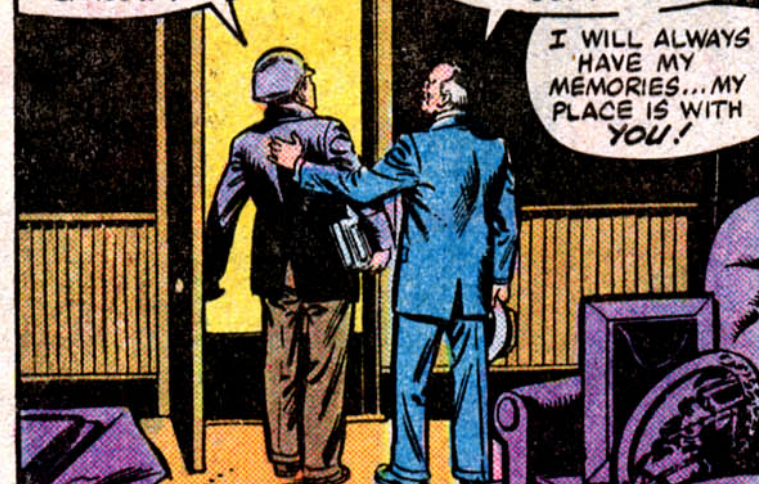
I WILL *ALWAYS* LOVE THESE THINGS, AND THIS HOUSE! BUT LIFE TAKES US FAR AWAY...



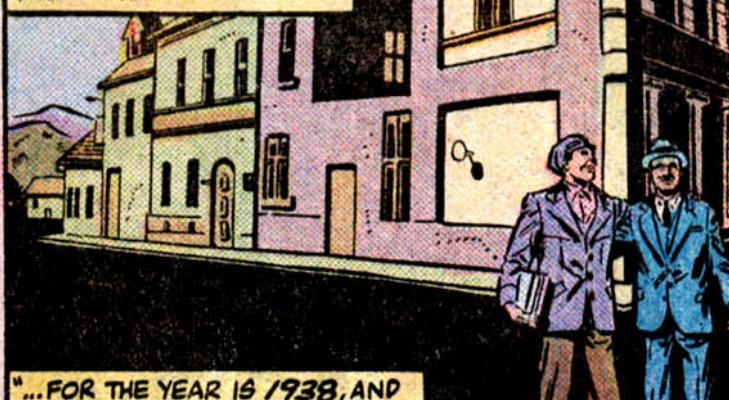
TELL ME, FATHER--DO YOU REGRET YOUR DECISION TO COME WITH ME TO CRACOW?

I, TOO, LOVE THIS HOUSE, BUT IT IS ONLY MEMORIES--AND MEMORIES CANNOT TAKE THE PLACE OF A SON!

I WILL ALWAYS HAVE MY MEMORIES... MY PLACE IS WITH YOU!

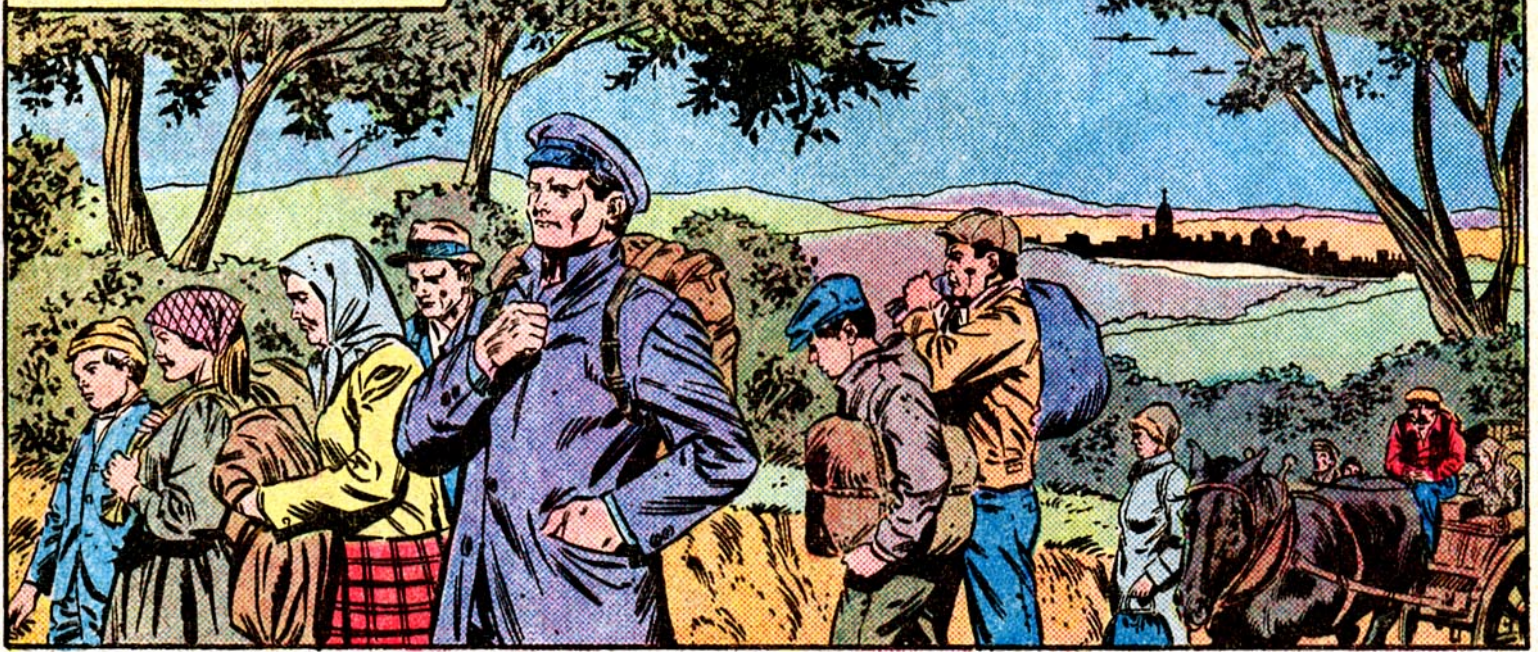


"KAROL AND HIS FATHER TAKE AN APARTMENT IN CRACOW, AND KAROL CONTINUES HIS STUDIES AND HIS ACTING. NEITHER FATHER NOR SON CAN GUESS THAT KAROL'S CAREER AT THE JAGIELLONIAN WILL LAST NO MORE THAN A YEAR..."

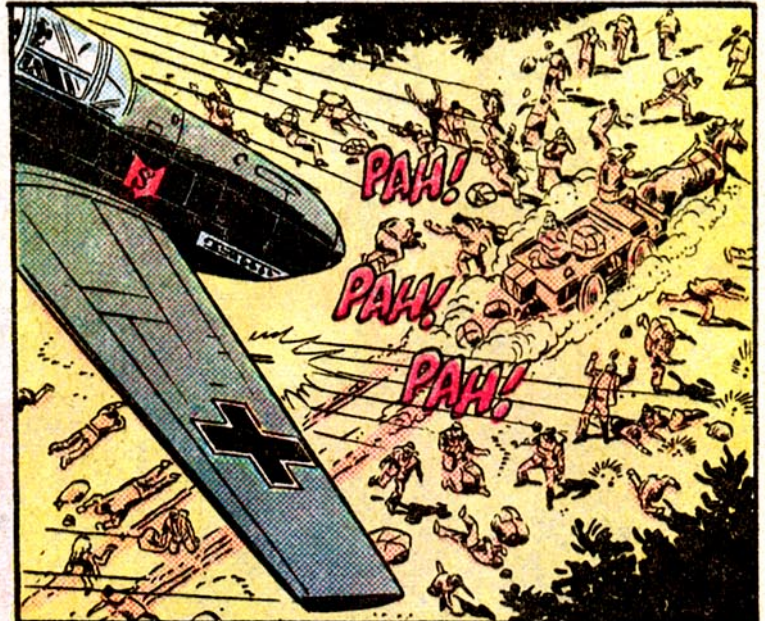
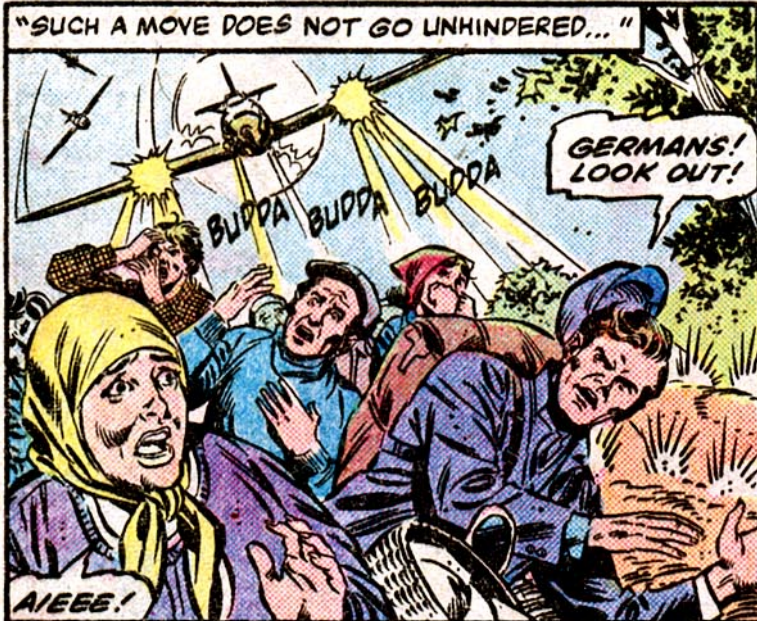


"...FOR THE YEAR IS 1938, AND

"POLAND NEEDS MORE FROM HER PEOPLE THAN PRAYERS, HOWEVER! WITHIN DAYS, KAROL LEAVES CRACOW TO JOIN UP WITH THE ARMY IN THE EAST--AND JOINS THE EVER-GROWING PROCESSION OF REFUGEES, FLEEING FROM THE GERMAN TERROR..."



"SUCH A MOVE DOES NOT GO UNHINDERED..."



"WITH NEW DETERMINATION, KAROL MARCHES TOWARD THE EAST. UNKNOWN TO THE YOUNG MAN, THERE HAVE BEEN NEW EVENTS... OF DISASTROUS IMPORTANCE..."



YOU ARE MISINFORMED, MY FRIEND! THE **SOVIETS** SWEEP OVER OUR EASTERN BORDERS -- WE ARE ATTACKED ON TWO FRONTS!

RUSSIA? BUT WE HAD A TREATY--!

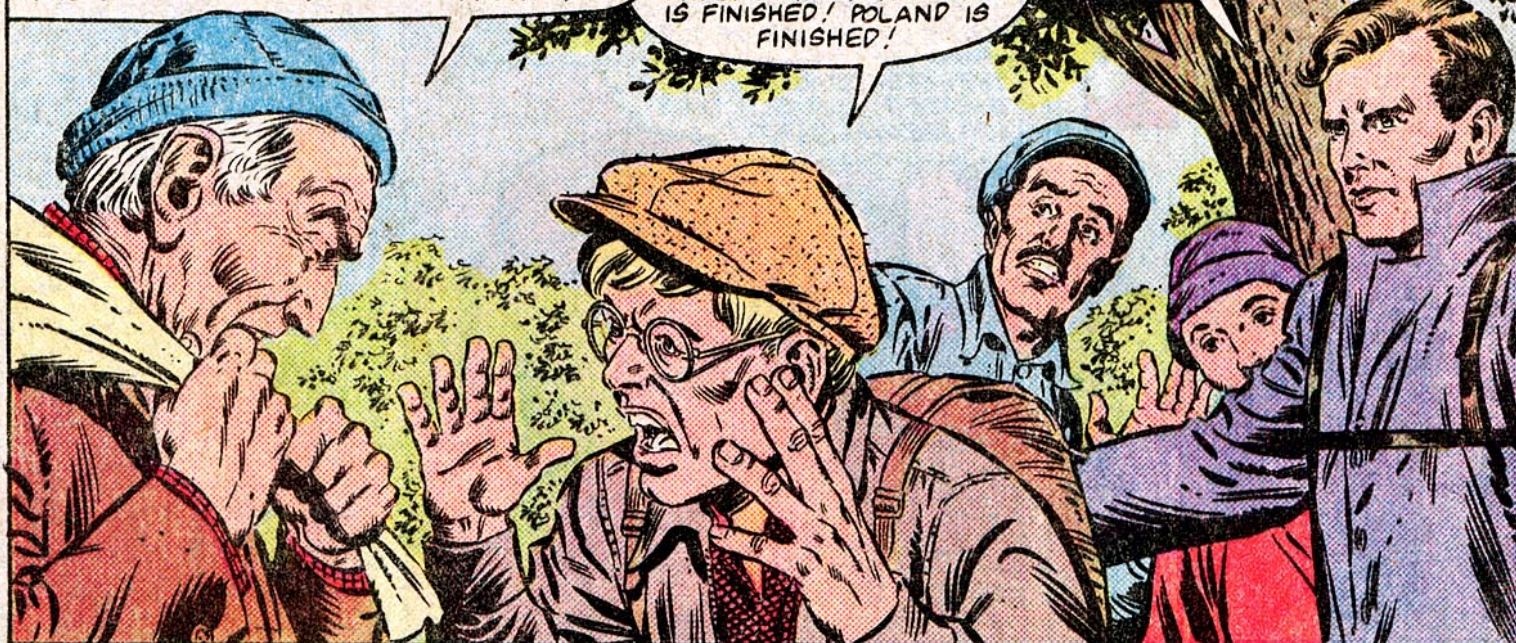
NO MORE! HITLER DECLARED POLAND DIS-SOLVED, YOU SEE--AND WITH NO POLAND, THERE IS NO TREATY! OR SO THE RUSSIANS WISH TO VIEW IT!



I FEAR OUR ARMY WILL BE UNABLE TO HANDLE TWO WARS ON TWO DIFFERENT FRONTS!

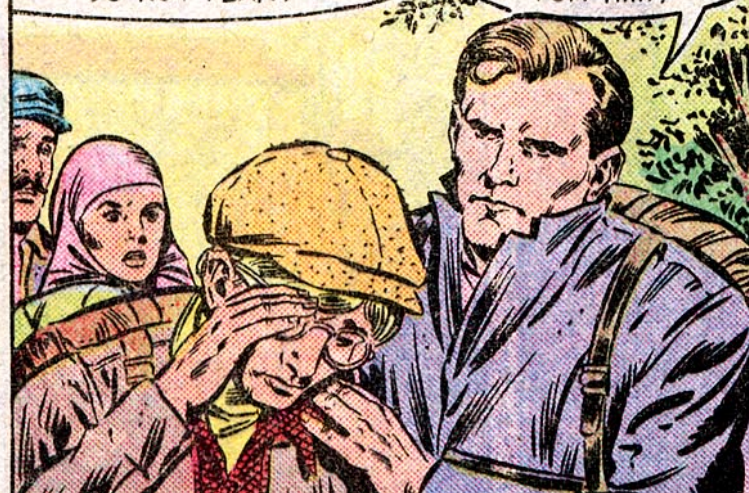
OLD FOOL! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND? THE ARMY IS FINISHED! POLAND IS FINISHED!

CALM YOURSELF!



WE ARE IN A PERIOD OF TURMOIL, YES... BUT I CANNOT BELIEVE THAT IT WILL NOT, IN THE END, LEAD TO A STRONGER, FREE POLAND! WE WILL RECOVER, DO NOT FEAR!

TRUST IN GOD, AND DO NOT DESPAIR -- FOR BY DESPAIR, YOU DO YOUR ENEMY'S WORK FOR HIM!

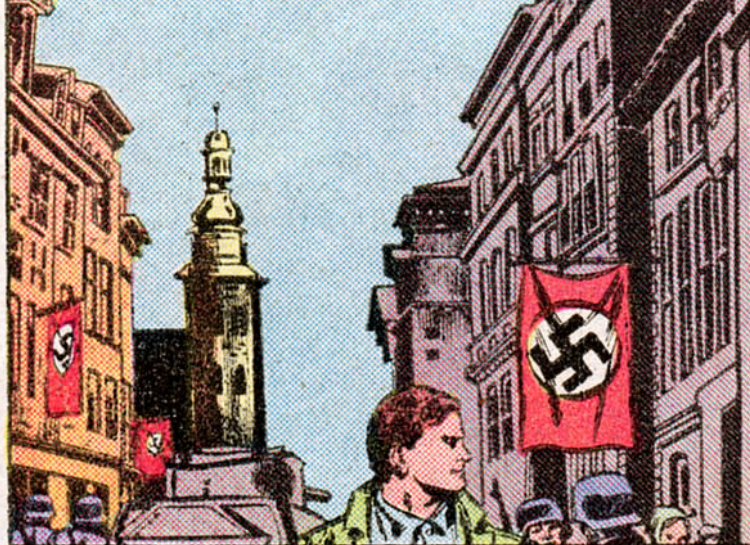


WAIT! WHERE ARE YOU GOING?

BACK TO CRACOW--AND WHATEVER IS IN STORE FOR OUR COUNTRY!

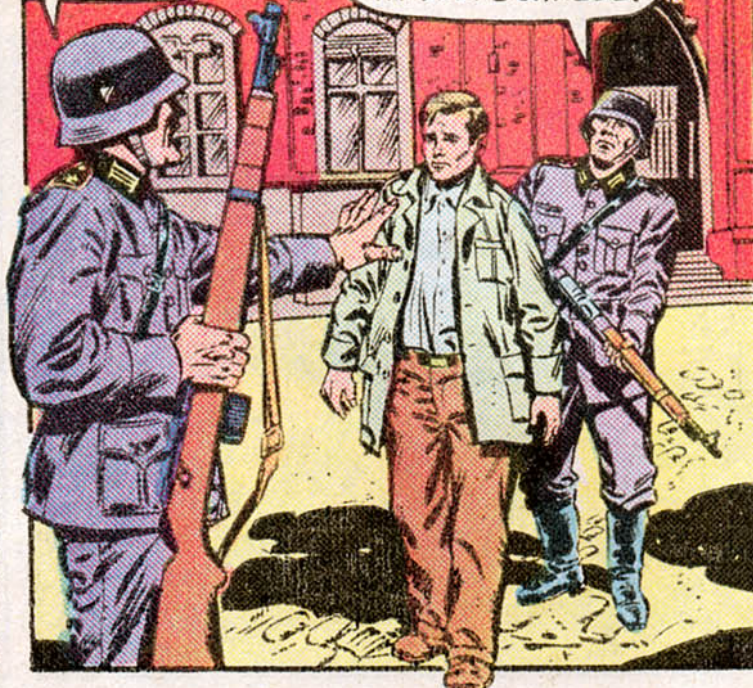


"BY 1941, IT IS A FAR DIFFERENT CRACOW THAT HOUSES KAROL WOJTYLA. FOLLOWING THE SURRENDER OF ITS BELEAGUERED ARMY, AND THE ESCAPE OF THE GOVERNMENT TO LONDON, ENGLAND, POLAND'S FREEDOM IS GROUND OUT BY THE NAZI BOOT, AND ITS SPIRIT IS UNDER CONSTANT ATTACK..."



HEY, YOU! **POLE!**

LET'S SEE YOUR WORK PAPERS! **SCHNELL!**



WOJTYLA, EH?
WORKER AT THE
SOLVAY CHEMICAL
PLANT? WHAT ARE
YOU WAITING FOR,
POLE? YOU ARE
NEEDED FOR THE
WAR EFFORT!



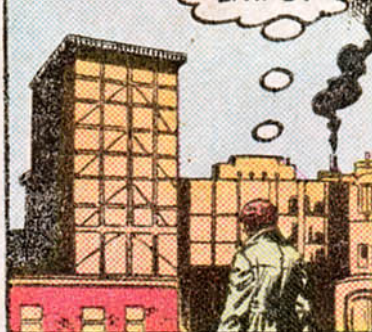
HOW MUCH CAN WE BEAR? THE GERMANS
CLOSE OUR SCHOOLS AND CHURCHES, ROUND
UP OUR PRIESTS, DESTROY OUR ART, EVEN
FORBID US THE USE OF OUR LANGUAGE!

THEY SEEK TO REDUCE US TO
BRUTES, SUITABLE ONLY
FOR **MENTAL LABOR!**



WE MUST KEEP OUR ARTS
AND LANGUAGE ALIVE, EVEN
IF IT IS UNDERGROUND!
THE NAZIS WOULD PROBABLY
EXECUTE ME IF THEY
LEARNED I WAS IN THE
RHAPSODIC THEATER...

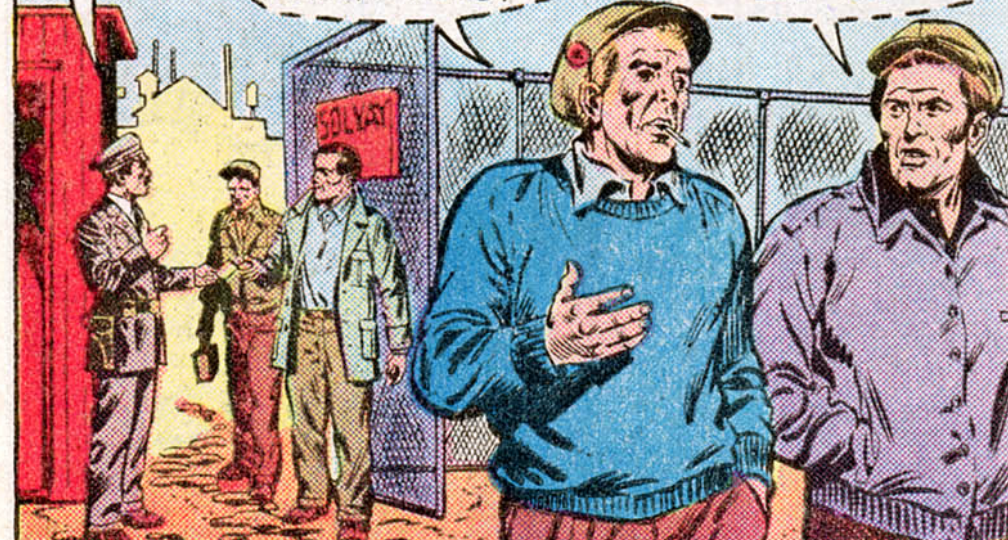
... BUT IT IS
WORTH THE
RISK TO KEEP
MY ART--AND
THE HOPE OF
POLAND--
LIVING!



WOJTYLA!
YOU MAY
ENTER!

THERE WAS ANOTHER **RAID**
LAST NIGHT-- JUST DOWN
THE STREET! **JEWS**, I
THINK, IN HIDING!

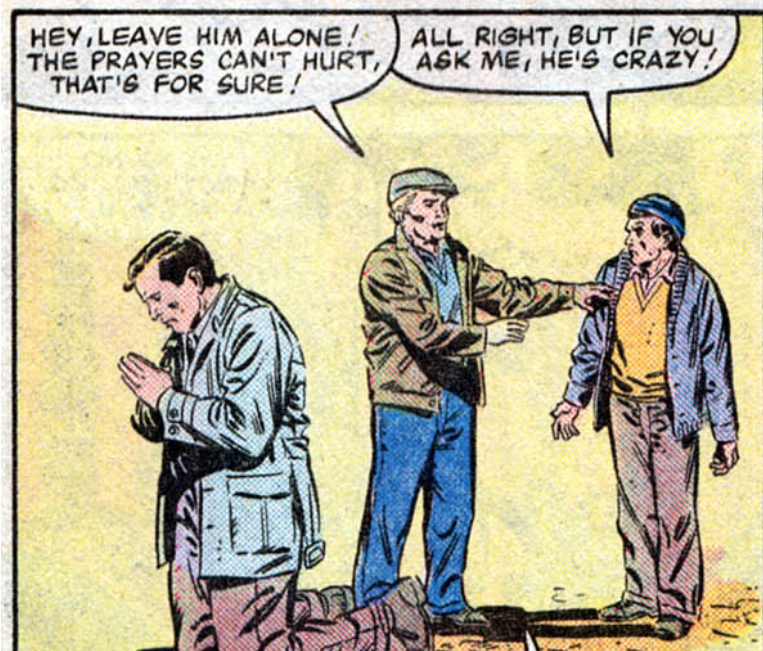
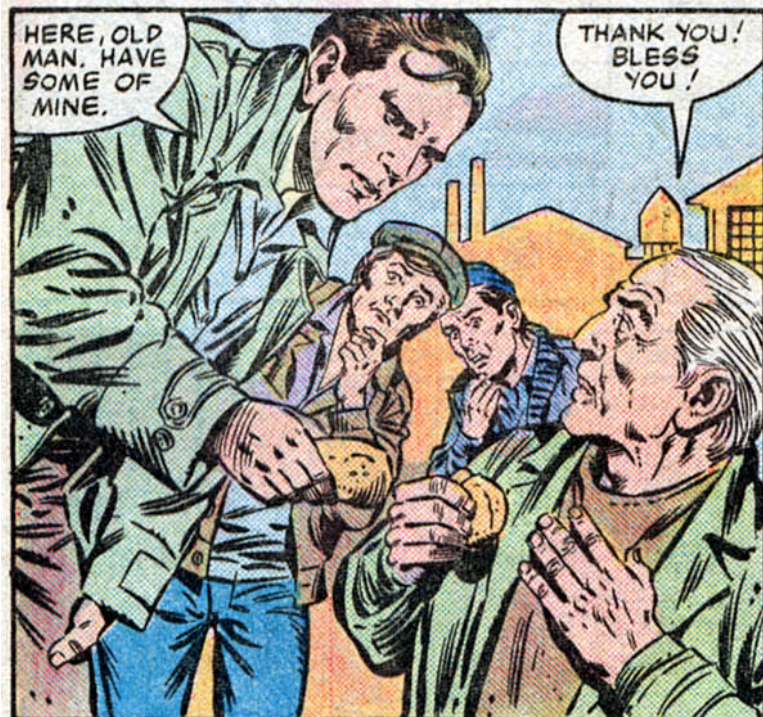
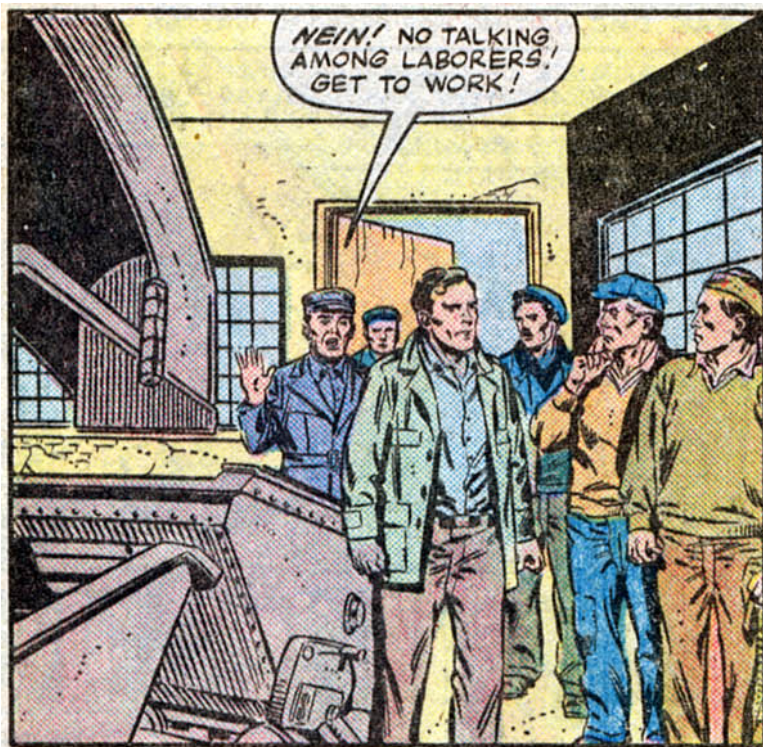
POOR DEVILS! I'VE HEARD
OF A PLACE NEAR
AUSCHWITZ THEY ARE
SENT TO...



PSSST!
KAROL!
WHERE'S
THE NEXT
THEATER
MEETING?

THURSDAY, 8 AT NIGHT!
THE OLD LADY'S ATTIC!
WE'RE DOING READINGS
OF NORWID'S POETRY!





"IN THE CRISIS OF THE GERMAN OCCUPATION, KAROL BIDES HIS TIME WAITING FOR FREEDOM, FILLING HIS LIFE WITH A NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES..."

"WITH HIS THEATER GROUP, HE HELPS TO PRESERVE THE WORK IN PERFORMANCE OF POLISH POETS AND PLAYWRIGHTS..."



"UNDER THE GUIDANCE OF THE FABLED 'MYSTICAL TAILOR OF CRACOW', JAN TYRANOWSKI, KAROL DELVES FURTHER INTO THE RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF HIS BEING, AS A MEMBER OF THE UNDERGROUND LIVING ROSARY..."

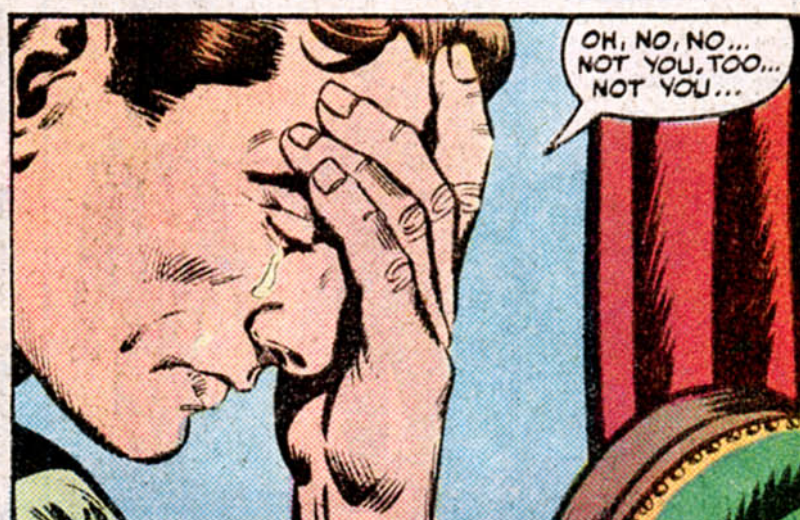
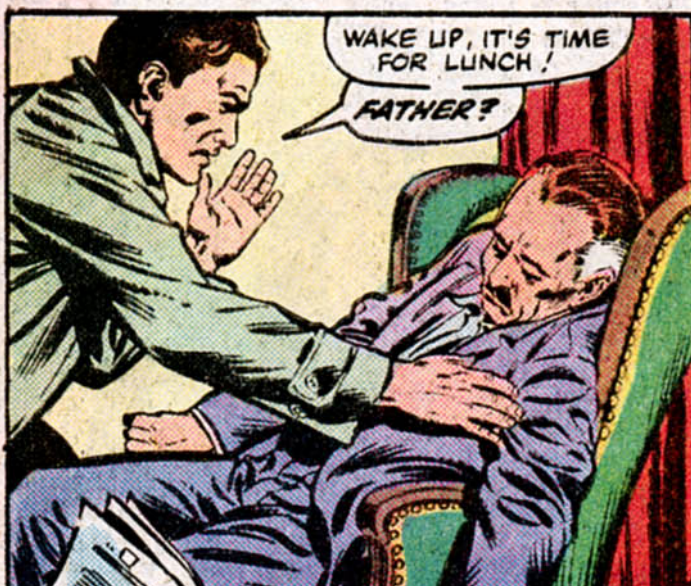
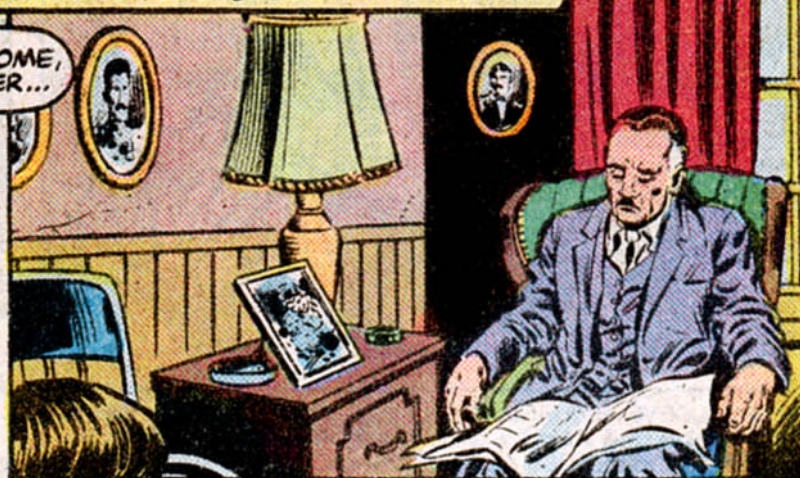


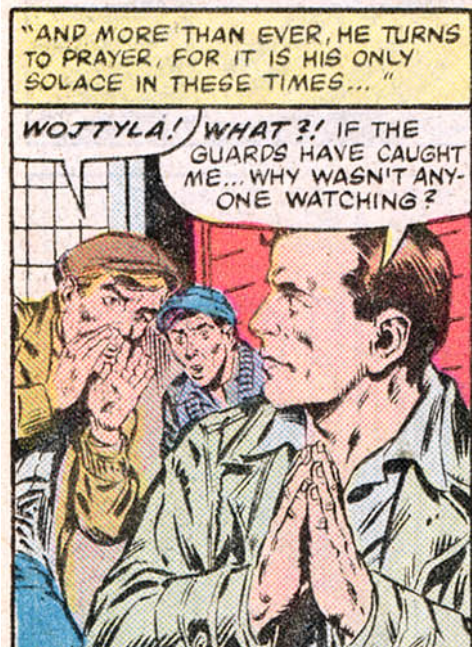
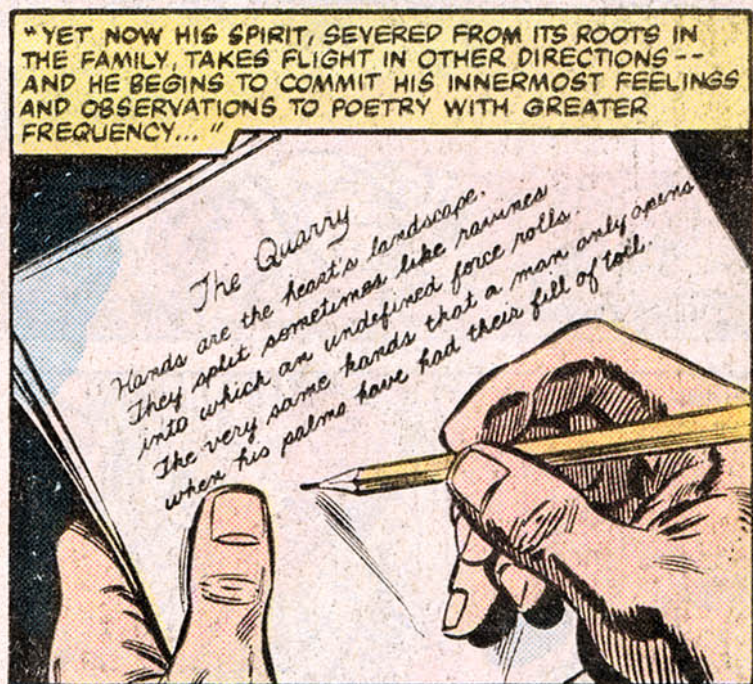
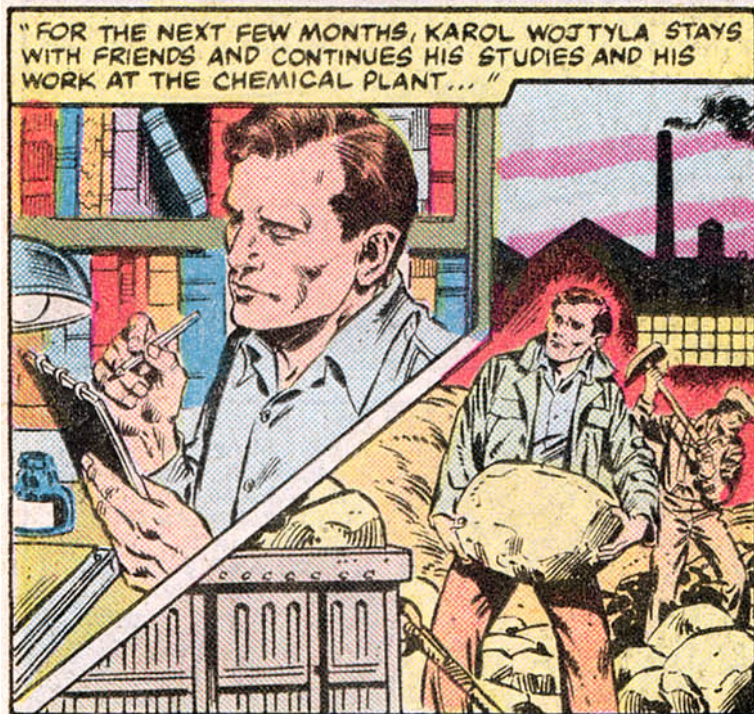
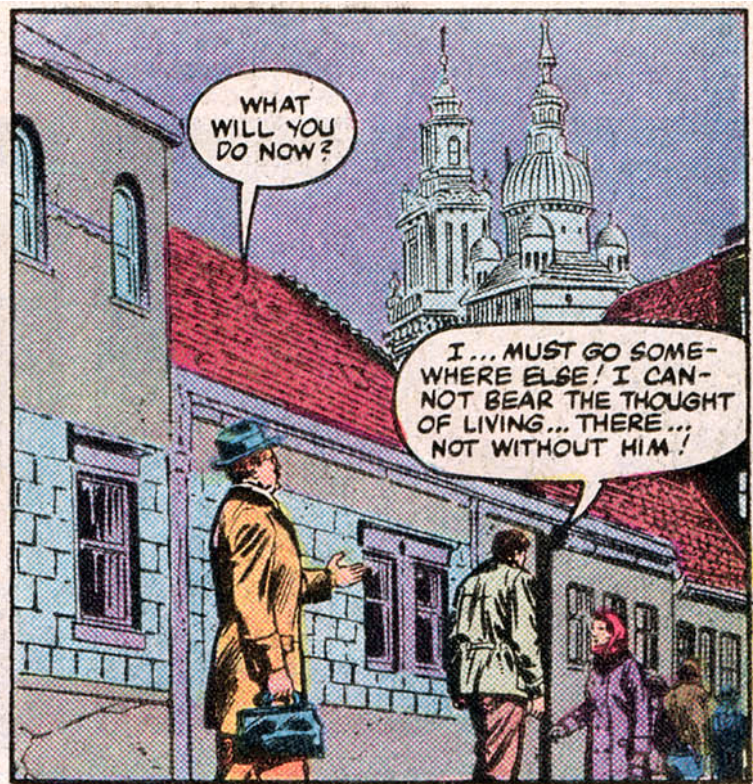
"AT THE FACTORY, HE WORKS DILIGENTLY -- FOR WHILE HIS BODY IS FORCED TO LABOR FOR THE GERMANS, KAROL'S MIND IS FREE, AND ACTIVE..."



"AND IN THOSE FEW MOMENTS OF SOLITUDE, KAROL TRIES HIS HAND AT WRITING HIS OWN POETRY, TO GIVE VOICE TO THOSE FEELINGS WHICH KNOW NO VOICE..."

"YET, IN THOSE DAYS OF 1941, EVEN THE FORCED CALM IN KAROL'S SOUL CANNOT LAST..."



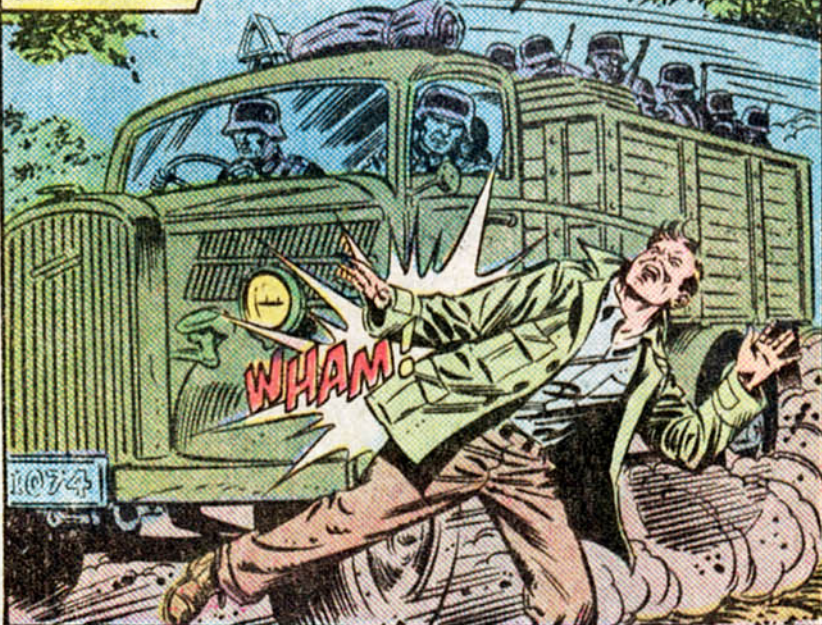


"IN WARTIME POLAND, THE DAYS DRAG ONE INTO THE OTHER, WITH LITTLE NEWS OF THE WAR'S PROGRESS. ALWAYS THERE IS THE THREAT OF THE GERMAN BULLET OR THE GERMAN CAMP..."



"... AND NOT EVEN THE YOUNG KAROL WOJTYLA IS FREE FROM THE TERROR OF UNEXPECTED VIOLENCE..."

OFF THE ROAD, PIG.



I TOLD YOU WE HIT SOMETHING! SOMEONE'S LYING OUT THERE HURT!

HEY, IT'S ONLY A POLE! TOO MANY OF THEM AS IT IS!



OHhhh... HE'S WAKING UP! GOOD!

A HOSPITAL? WH-WHAT AM I DOING HERE? I WAS ON THE ROAD, AND THEN... NOTHING!



YOU WERE RUN DOWN BY THE GERMANS A DAY AND A HALF AGO. YOUR INJURIES ARE BAD-- YOU'D BE DEAD IN A DITCH IF A WOMAN HADN'T FOUND YOU AND BROUGHT YOU IN.

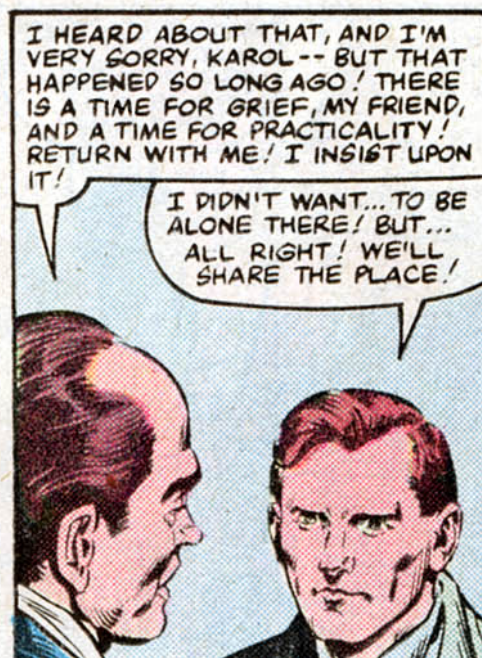
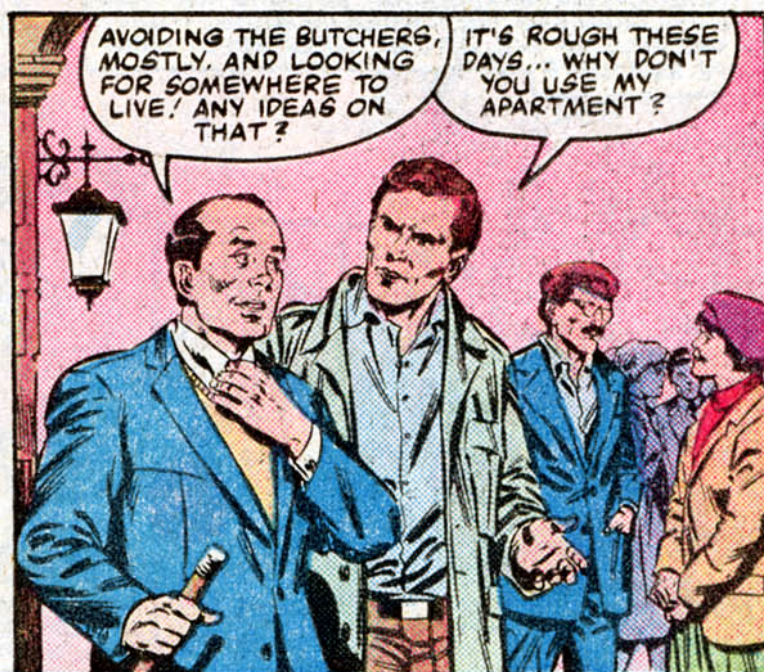
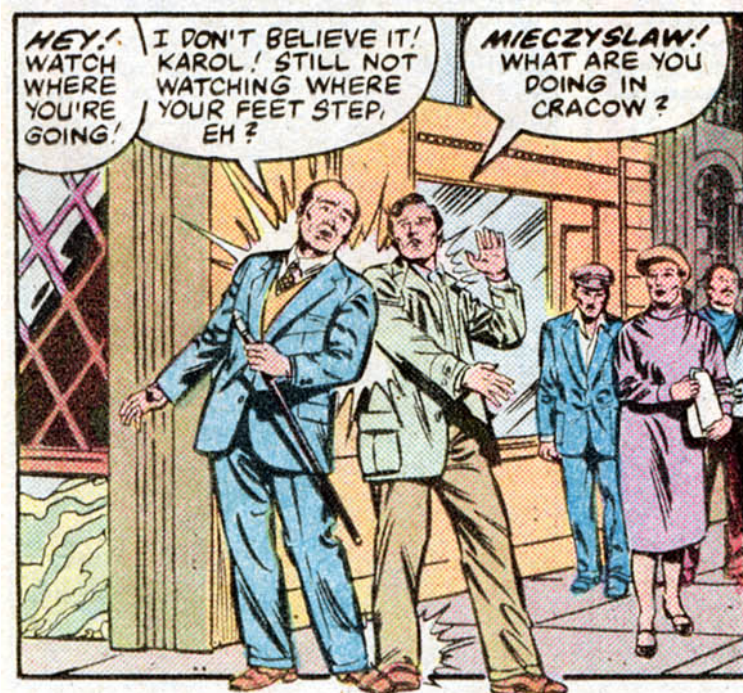
"AFTER HIS RELEASE, KAROL LOOKS FOR THE WOMAN TO THANK HER, WITHOUT SUCCESS. LIKE SO MANY OTHERS IN WARTIME POLAND, SHE HAS VANISHED WITHOUT A TRACE..."



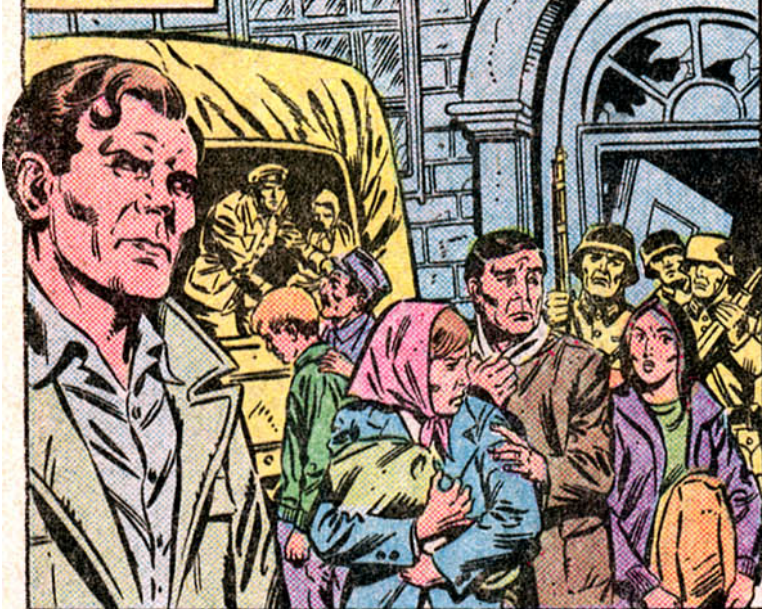
BY THE WAY... YOU HAVE A VISITOR!

I'M GLAD YOU'RE ALL RIGHT, KAROL. I WAS SO WORRIED... I BROUGHT YOU A BOOK TO READ, WHILE YOU'RE RECOVERING...

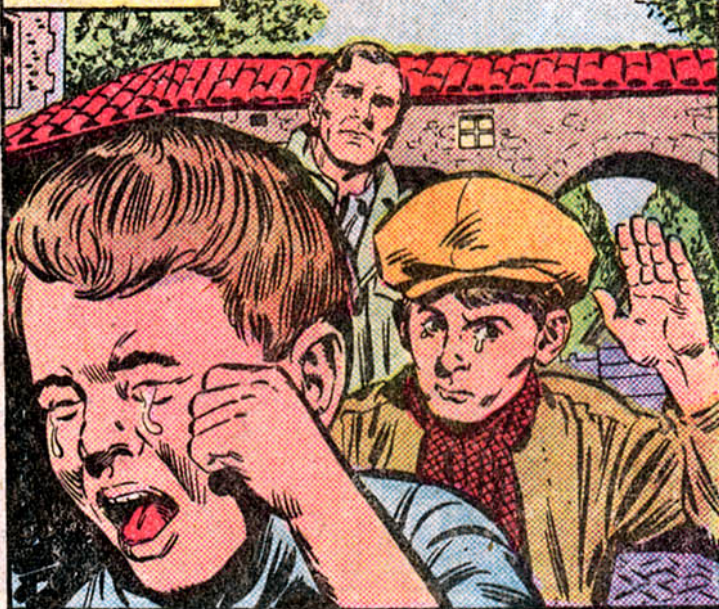




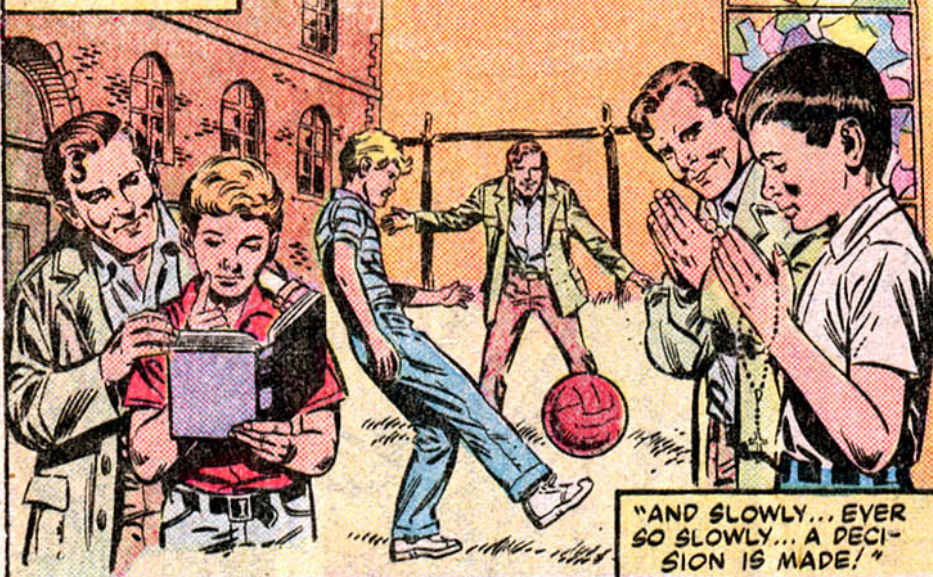
"DURING THESE YEARS OF THE OCCUPATION, KAROL WATCHES HIS COUNTRY SUFFERING. HE SEES WHOLE FAMILIES DISAPPEAR FOREVER INTO THE CONCENTRATION CAMPS..."



"HE SEES CHILDREN GROWING UP WITH NO KNOWLEDGE OF THEIR CULTURE OR HERITAGE--AND NO RESPIRE FROM THE FEAR AND HATRED THAT ERODES THEIR SOULS..."



"THE CHILDREN! THAT'S WHAT BOTHERS HIM! FOR THE CHILDREN ARE THE FUTURE OF POLAND-- AND IF THE SOUL OF THE FUTURE IS DESTROYED, WHAT HOPE REMAINS?"

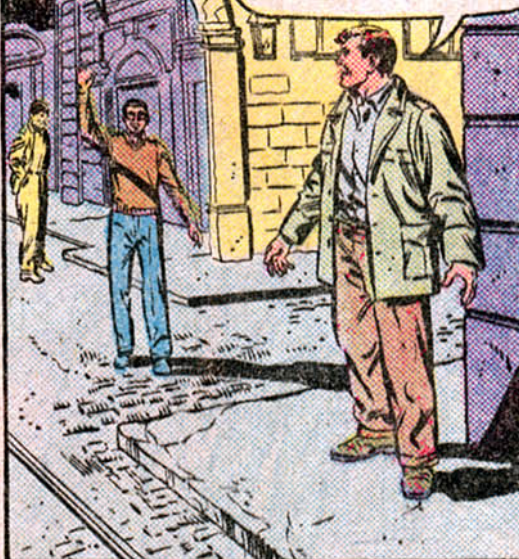


"AND SLOWLY... EVER SO SLOWLY... A DECISION IS MADE!"

HEY! KAROL! WAIT UP!

MIETEK!

I DIDN'T EXPECT TO RUN INTO YOU IN THIS PART OF TOWN.



I'M GLAD I RAN INTO YOU. WE HAVEN'T HAD MUCH CHANCE LATELY TO TALK AT THE LIVING ROSARY MEETINGS.

WELL, YOU'LL HAVE TO WALK WITH ME THEN. IT'S URGENT THAT I GET TO WAWEL.



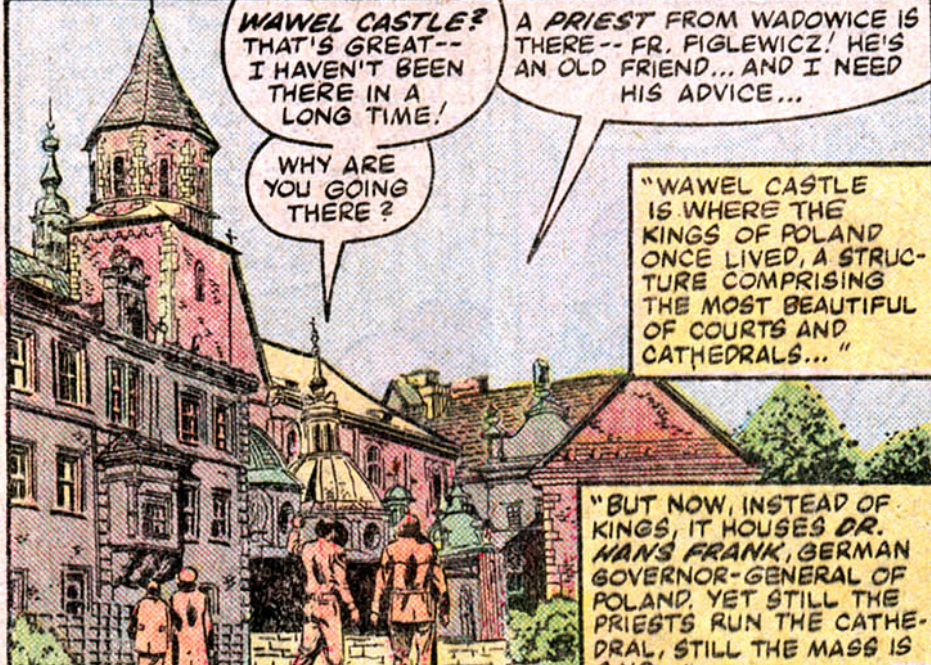
WAWEL CASTLE? THAT'S GREAT-- I HAVEN'T BEEN THERE IN A LONG TIME!

WHY ARE YOU GOING THERE?

A PRIEST FROM WADOWICE IS THERE-- FR. FIGLEWICZ! HE'S AN OLD FRIEND... AND I NEED HIS ADVICE...

"WAWEL CASTLE IS WHERE THE KINGS OF POLAND ONCE LIVED, A STRUCTURE COMPRISING THE MOST BEAUTIFUL OF COURTS AND CATHEDRALS..."

"BUT NOW, INSTEAD OF KINGS, IT HOUSES DR. HANS FRANK, GERMAN GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF POLAND. YET STILL THE PRIESTS RUN THE CATHEDRAL, STILL THE MASS IS

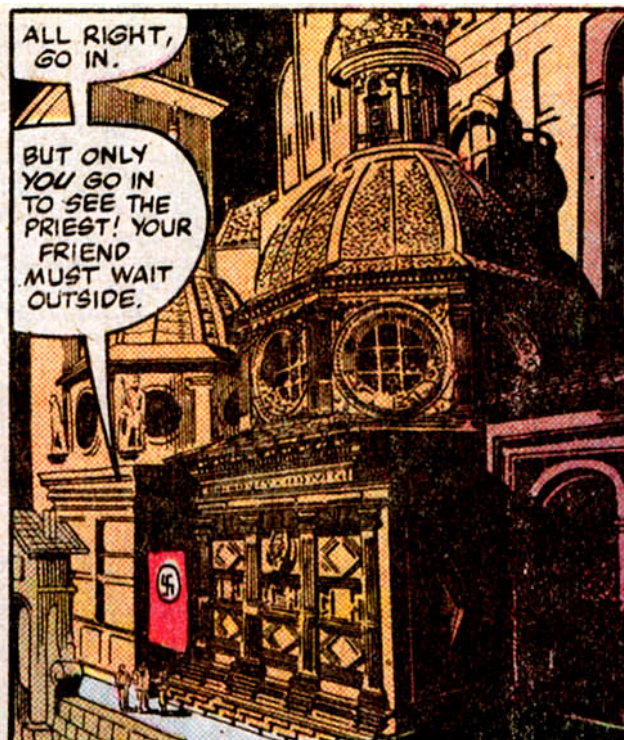




HALT! WHAT IS YOUR BUSINESS HERE?

I WISH TO SEE A PRIEST, A FATHER FIGLEWICZ.

JA. I KNOW OF HIM.



ALL RIGHT, GO IN.

BUT ONLY YOU GO IN TO SEE THE PRIEST! YOUR FRIEND MUST WAIT OUTSIDE.

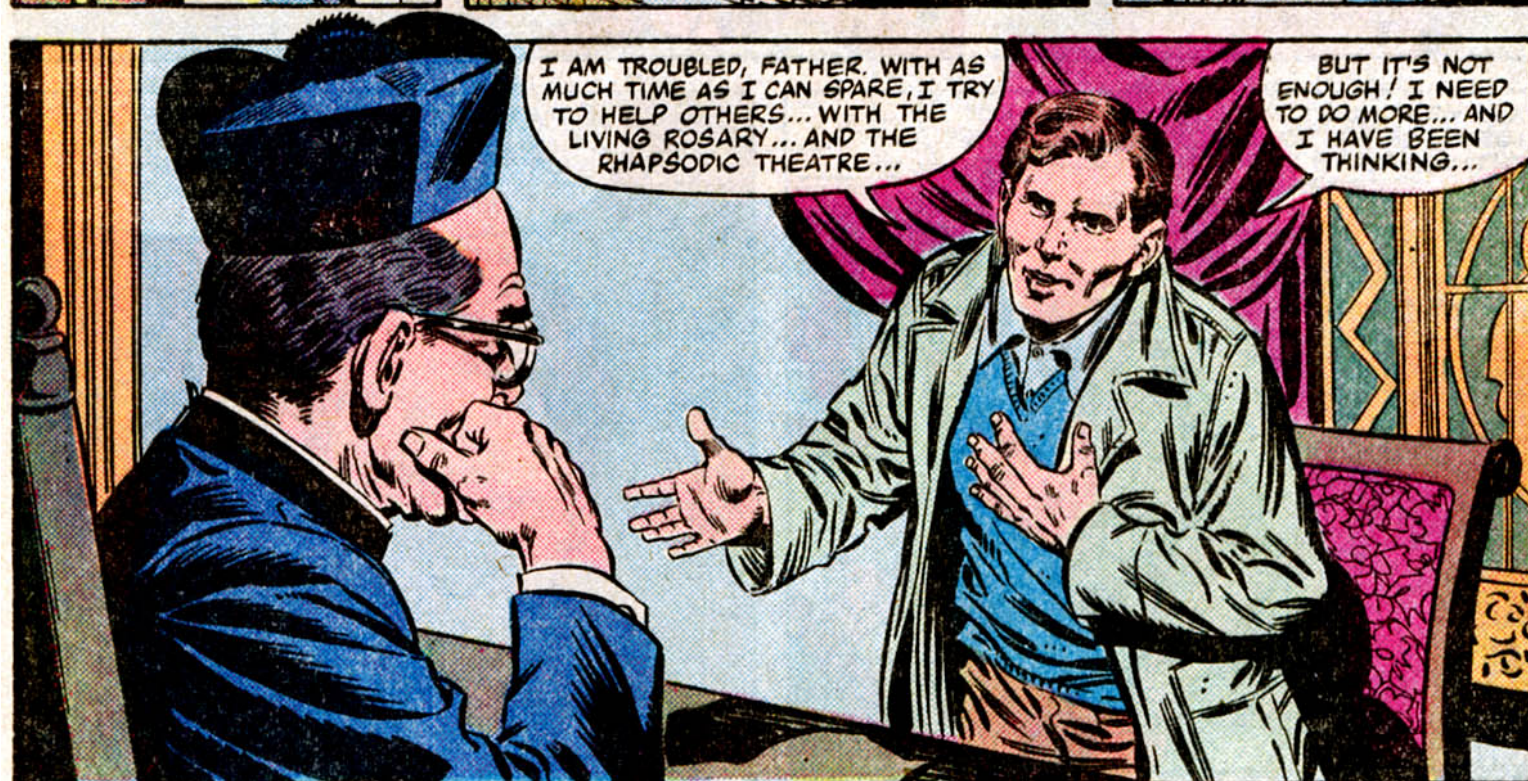


"MOMENTS LATER..."

FATHER? MAY I COME IN?

KAROL?

OF COURSE, YOU'RE ALWAYS WELCOME, BUT... WHAT BRINGS YOU HERE TODAY?

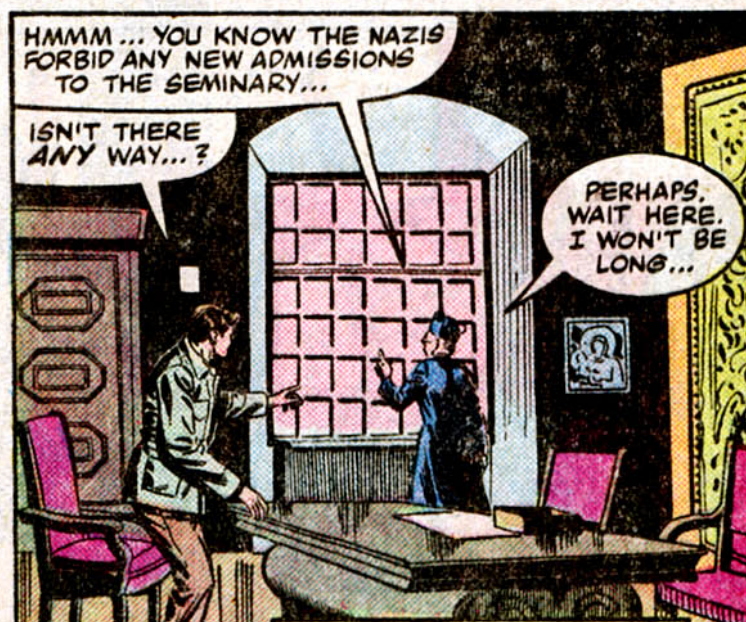


I AM TROUBLED, FATHER. WITH AS MUCH TIME AS I CAN SPARE, I TRY TO HELP OTHERS... WITH THE LIVING ROSARY... AND THE RHAPSODIC THEATRE...

BUT IT'S NOT ENOUGH! I NEED TO DO MORE... AND I HAVE BEEN THINKING...



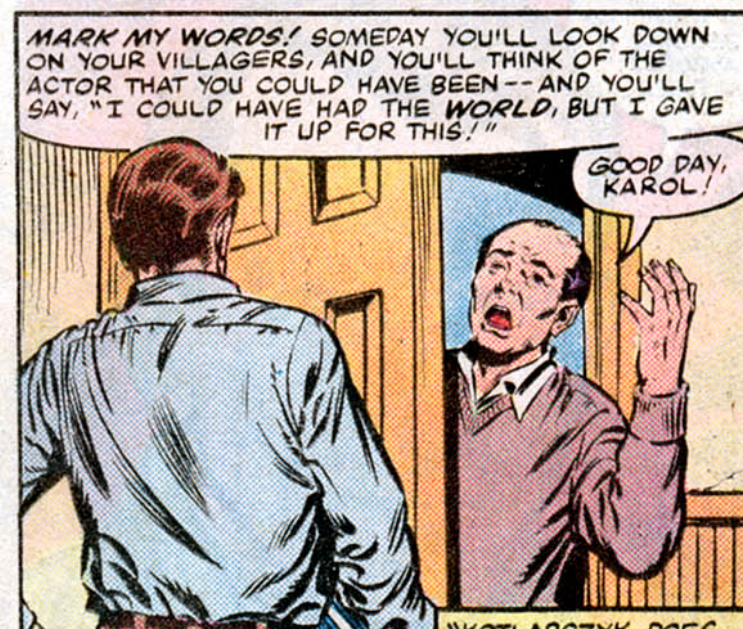
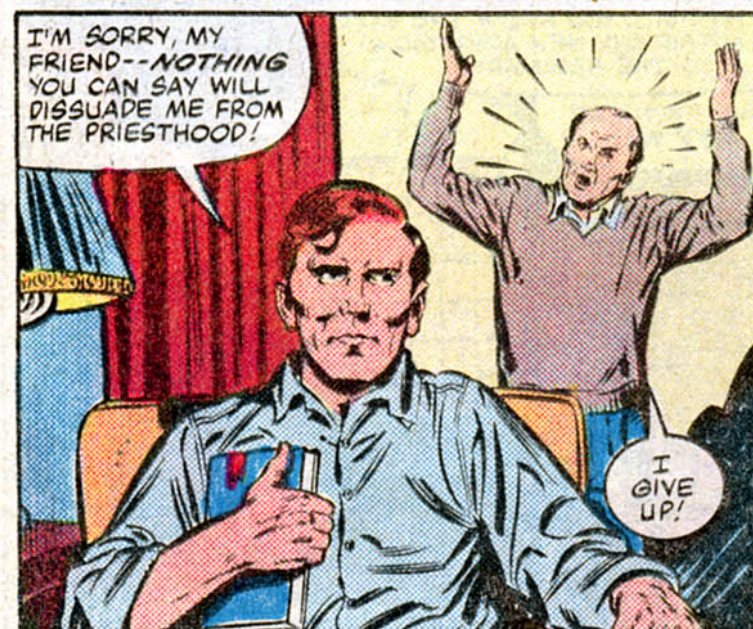
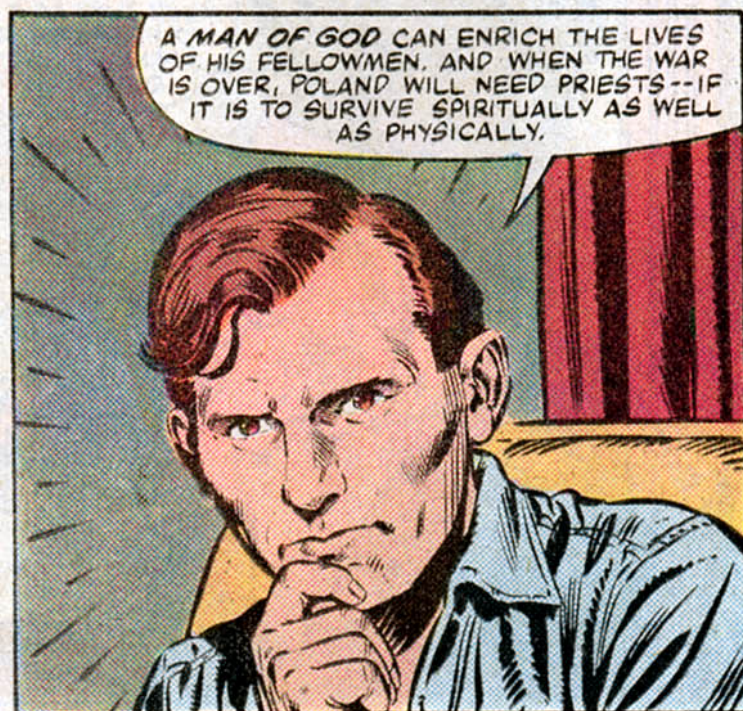
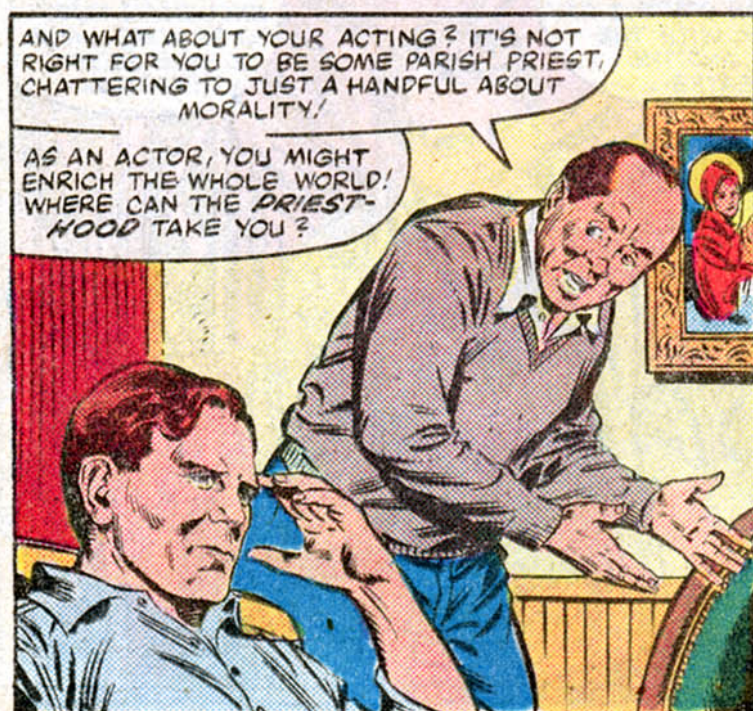
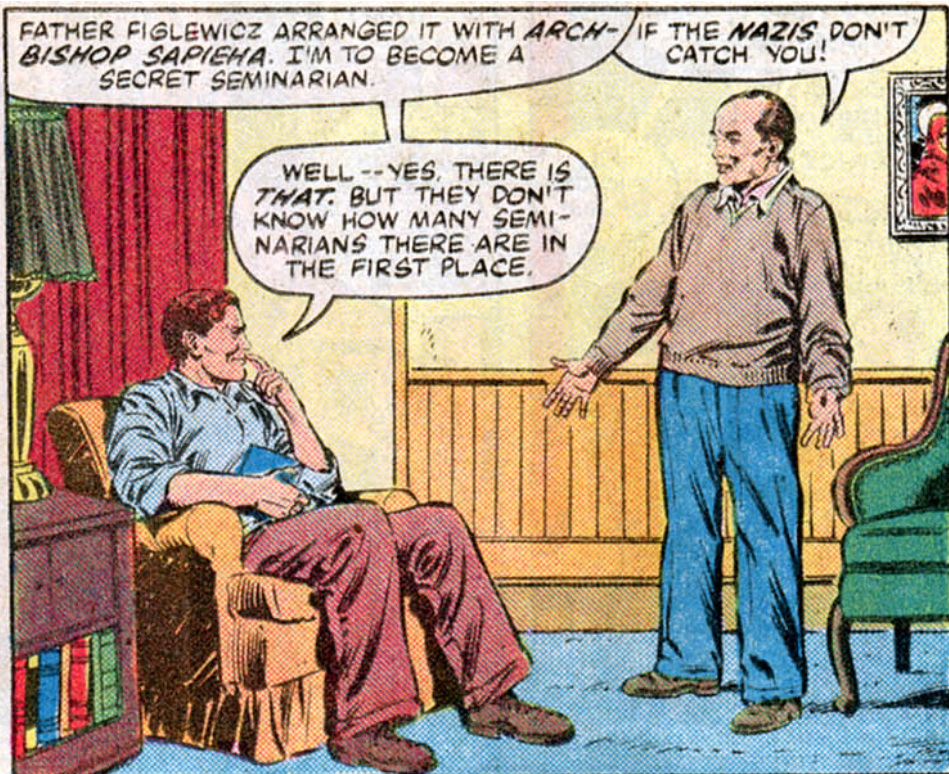
I WANT TO BECOME A PRIEST, FATHER.



HMMM... YOU KNOW THE NAZIS FORBID ANY NEW ADMISSIONS TO THE SEMINARY...

ISN'T THERE ANY WAY...?

PERHAPS, WAIT HERE. I WON'T BE LONG...

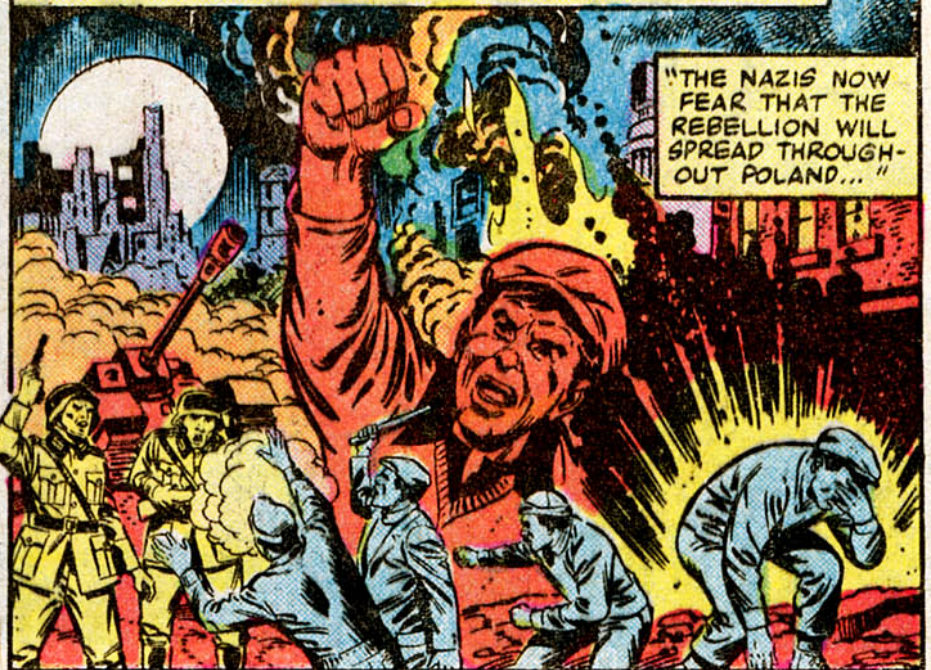


"...AND KAROL EAGERLY PURSUES HIS NEW VOCATION AT EVERY OPPORTUNITY. WHILE HIS FELLOW FACTORY WORKERS TAKE A LUNCH BREAK, HE CONTINUES READING..."

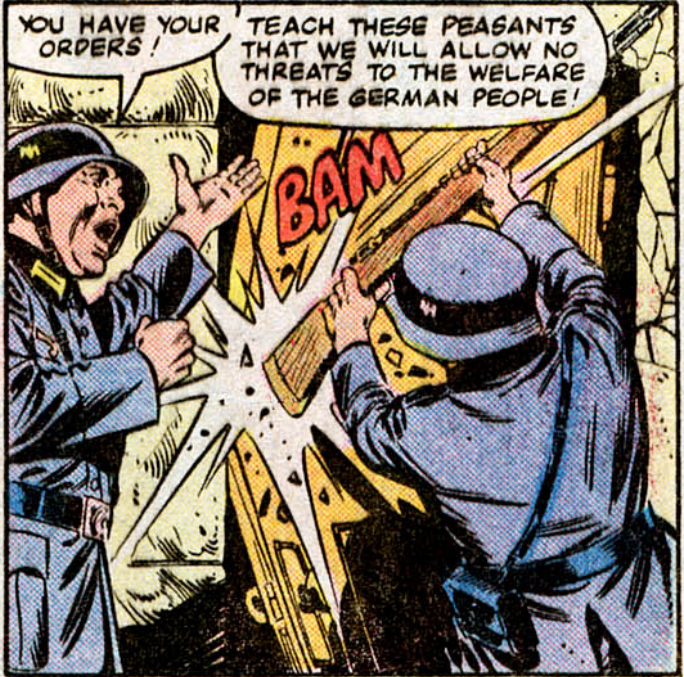
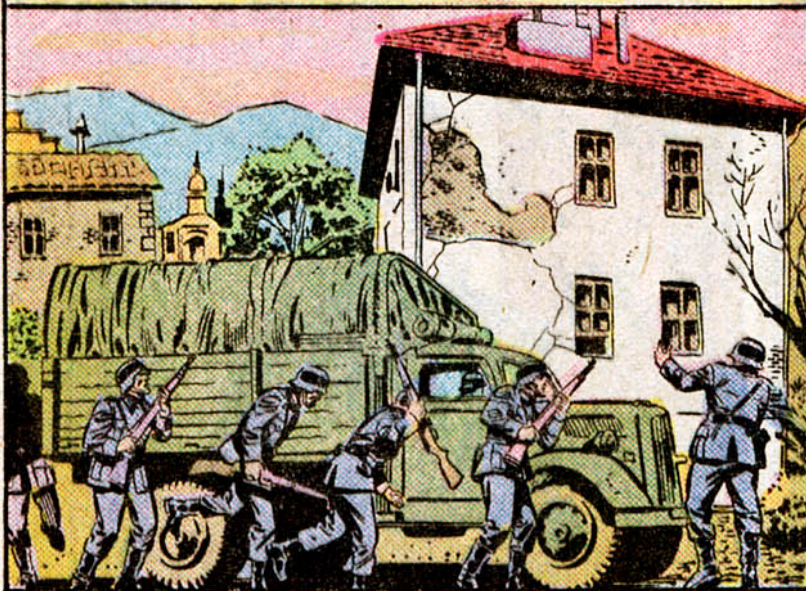
"YET, AS THE WAR DRAGS TO AN END, EVENTS ARE OCCURRING IN POLAND..."



AUGUST, 1944! IN WARSAW, SOME 150 MILES NORTH OF CRACOW, THE POLES BREAK INTO OPEN REVOLT, EXPECTING SUPPORT FROM THE INVADING SOVIETS... SUPPORT THAT NEVER COMES."



"ON AUGUST 7, 1944 -- BLACK SUNDAY -- THE WORD GOES OUT: ROUND UP ALL ABLE-BODIED MALES IN CRACOW -- AND BREAK THE BACK OF THE IMPENDING REVOLUTION."



"WITH BRUTAL SPEED, A SOLDIER ENTERS THE WOJTYLA APARTMENT..."

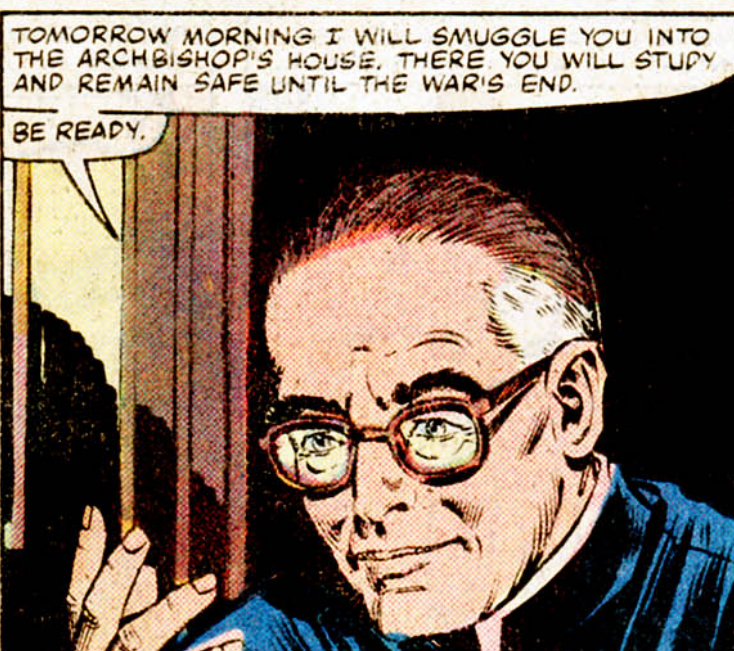
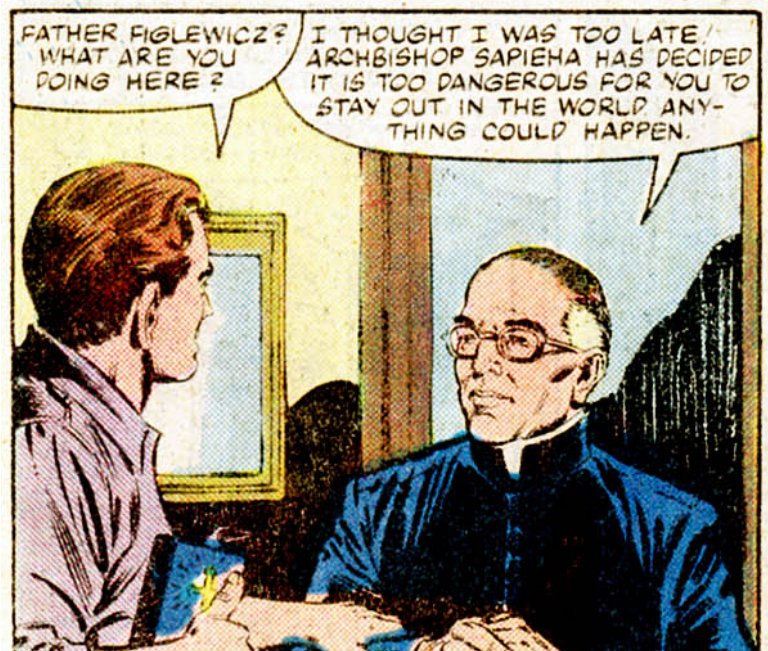
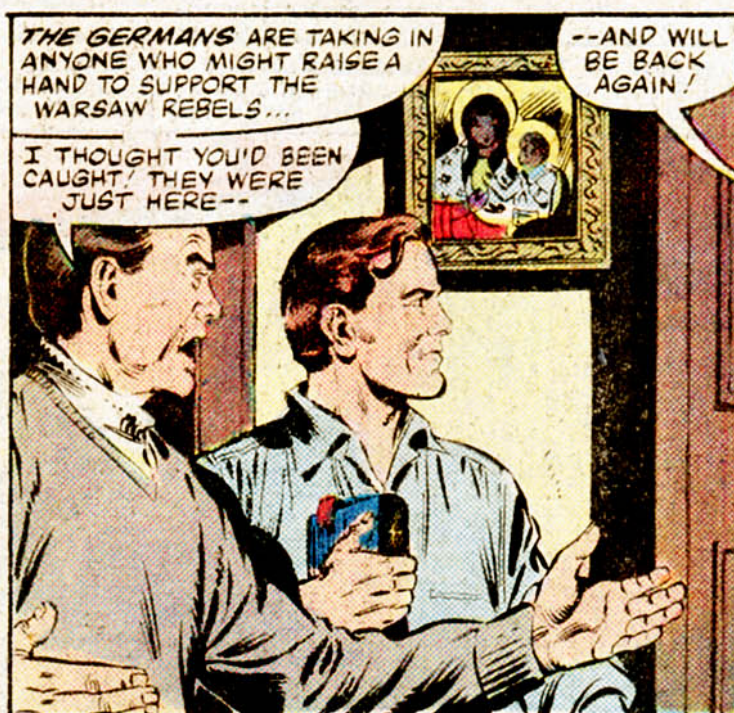
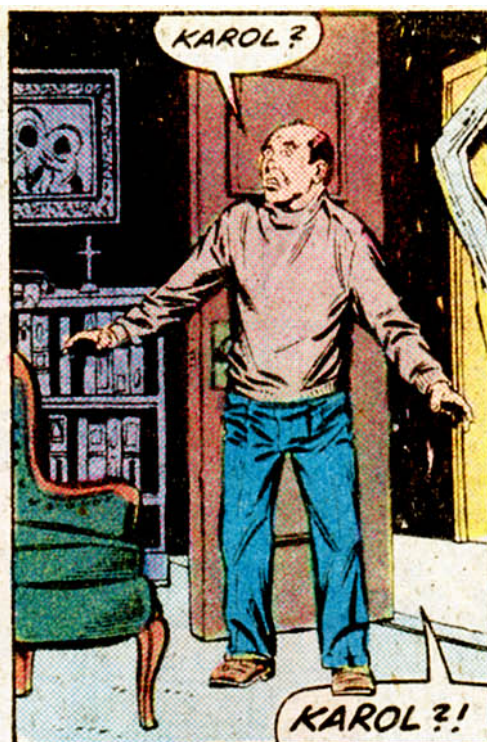
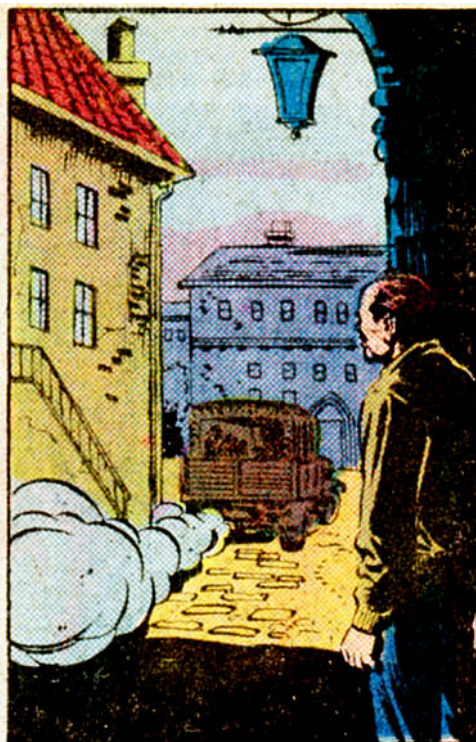


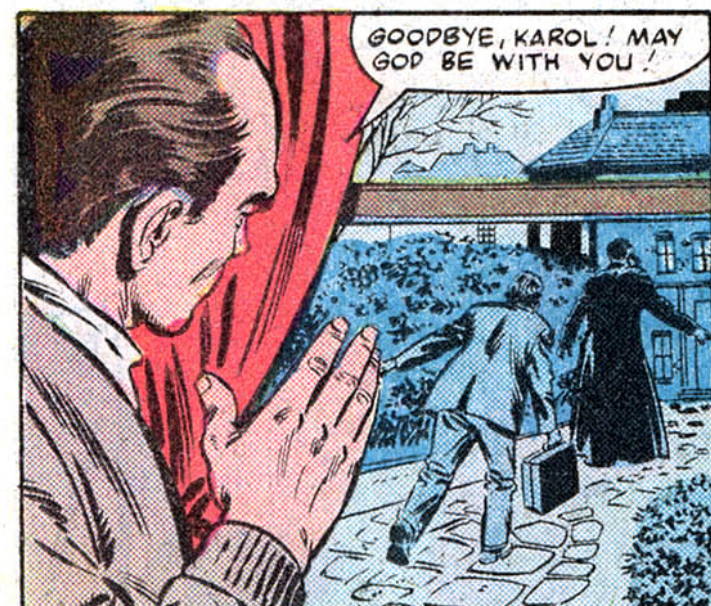
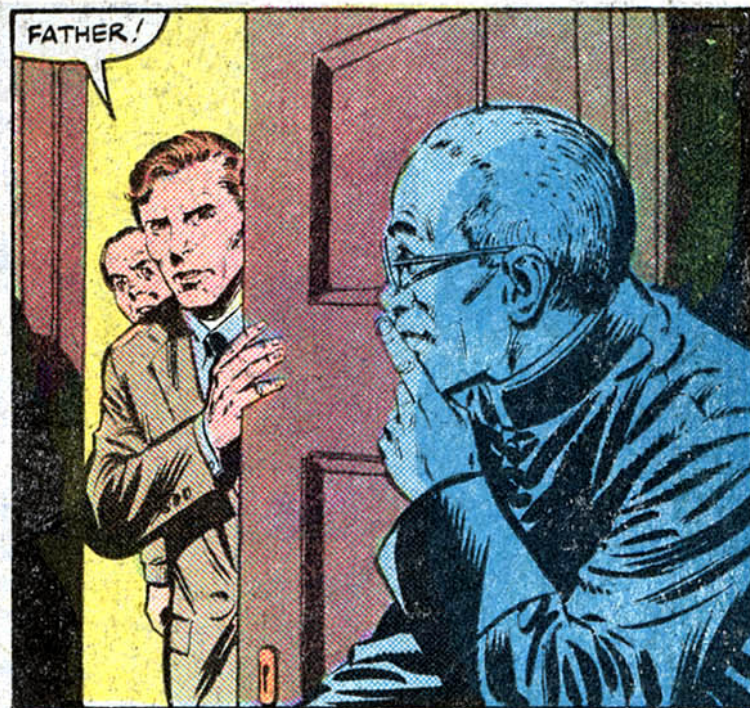
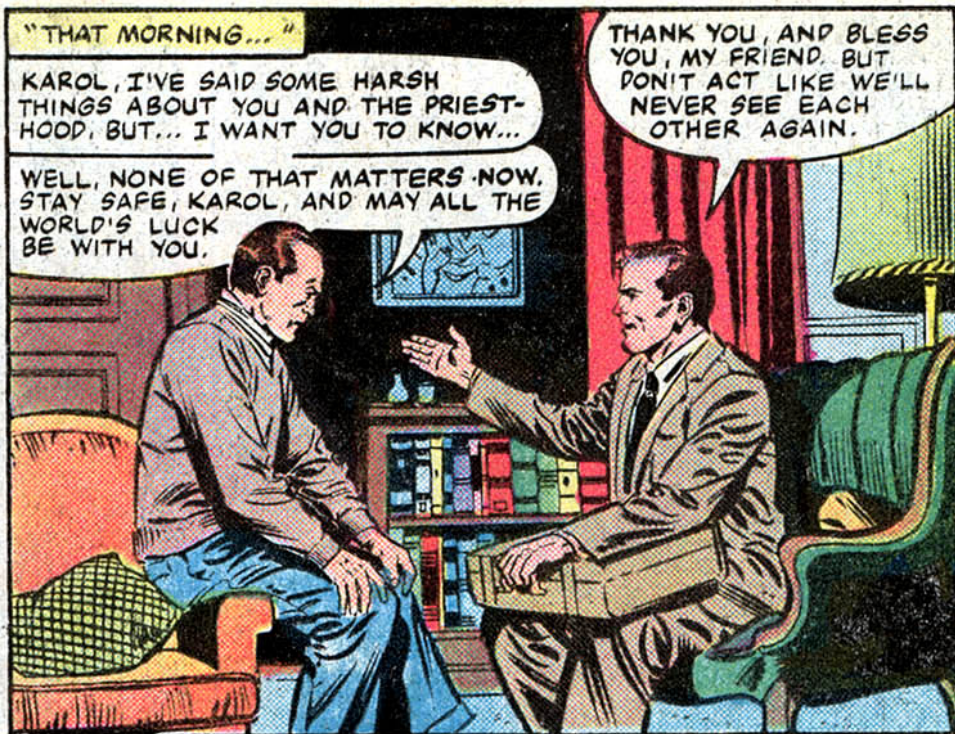
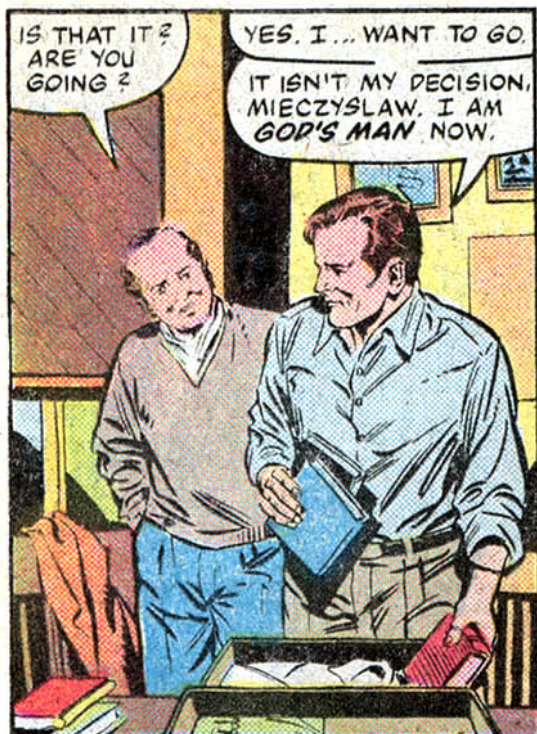
POLE! SHOW YOURSELF!

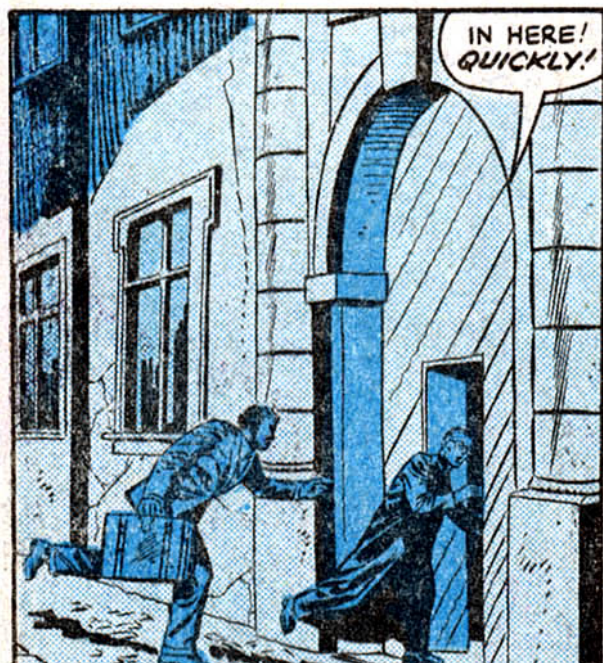
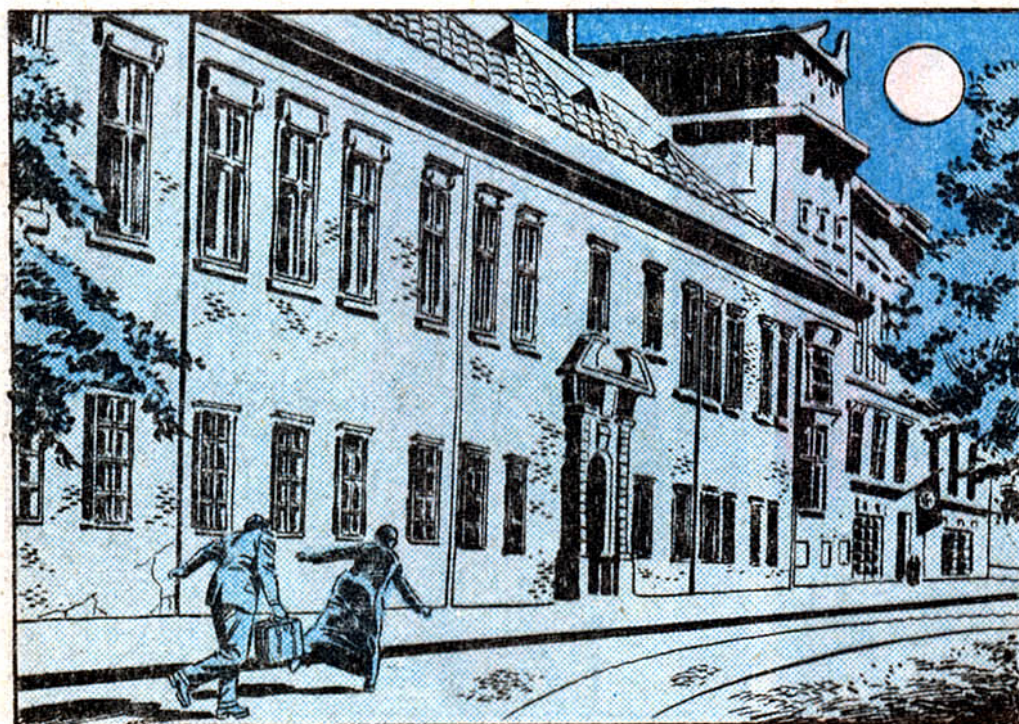
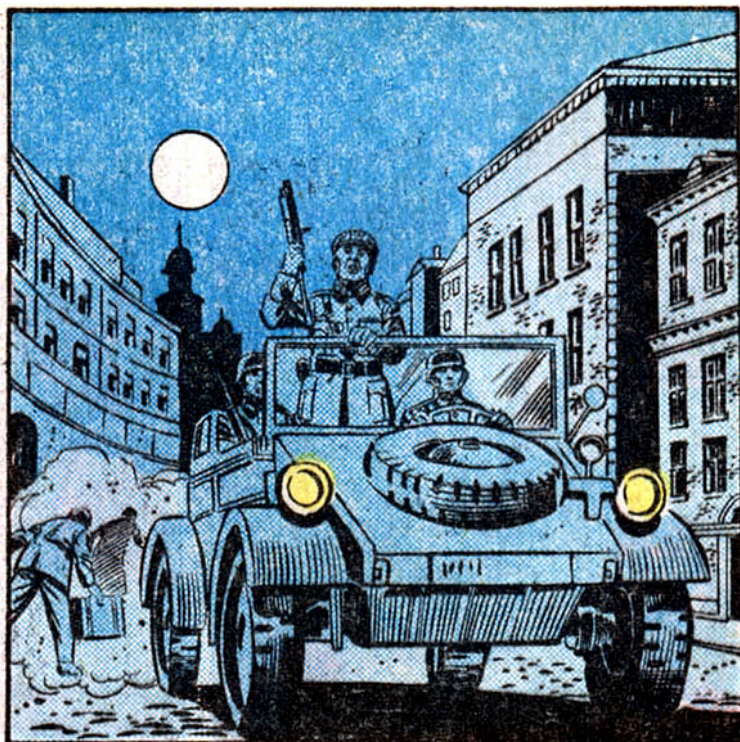


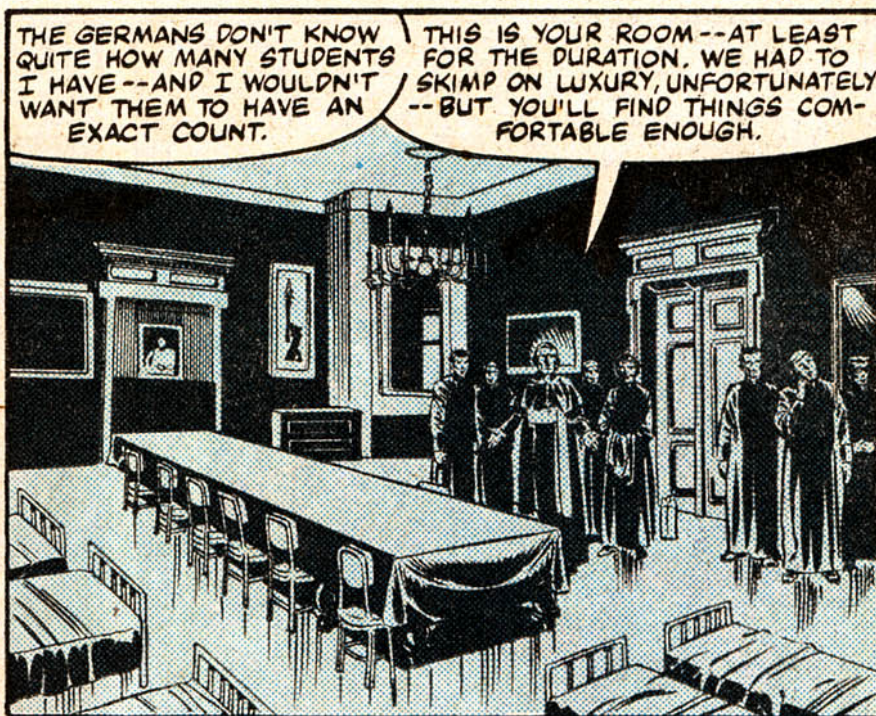
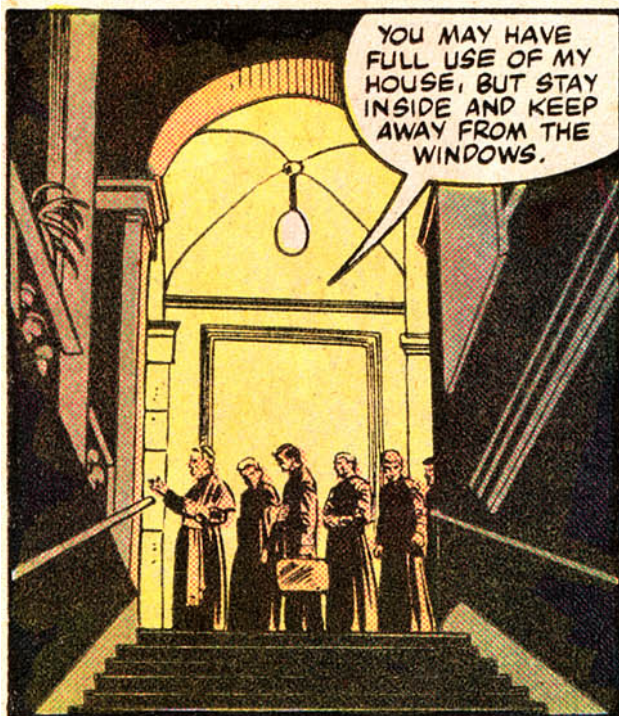
"BUT THERE IS NO ANSWER, AND THE SEARCH FOR WOJTYLA IS SUDDENLY INTERRUPTED BY THE SOLDIER'S SUPERIOR..."











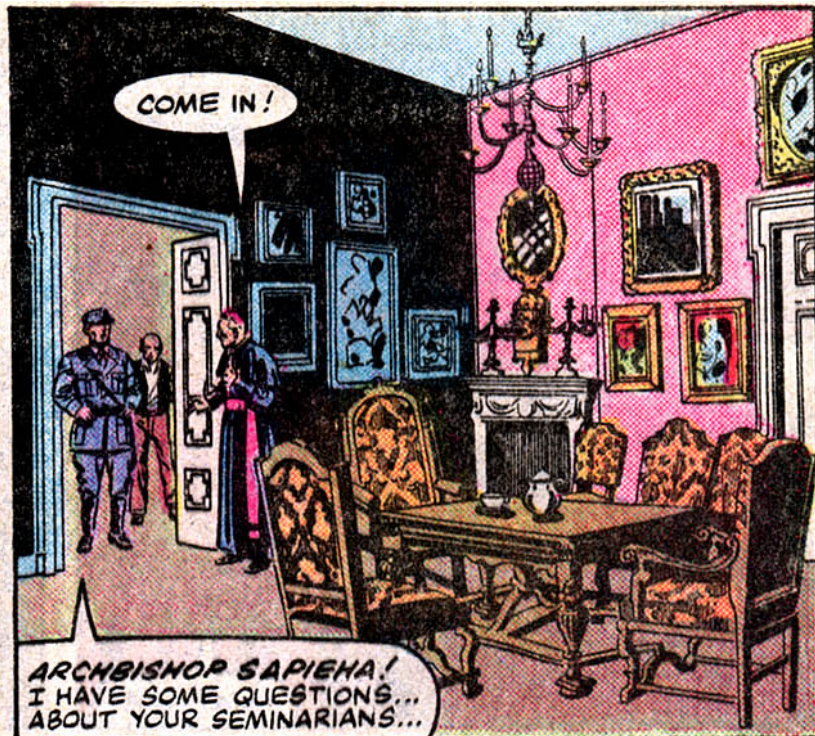
"KAROL WOJTYLA AND HIS FELLOWS LIVE WITH CONSTANT VIGILANCE. THEN, SEVERAL WEEKS LATER..."



NOK!
NOK!

YES?

GESTAPO! I WISH TO SEE HIS EXCELLENCY-- NOW!

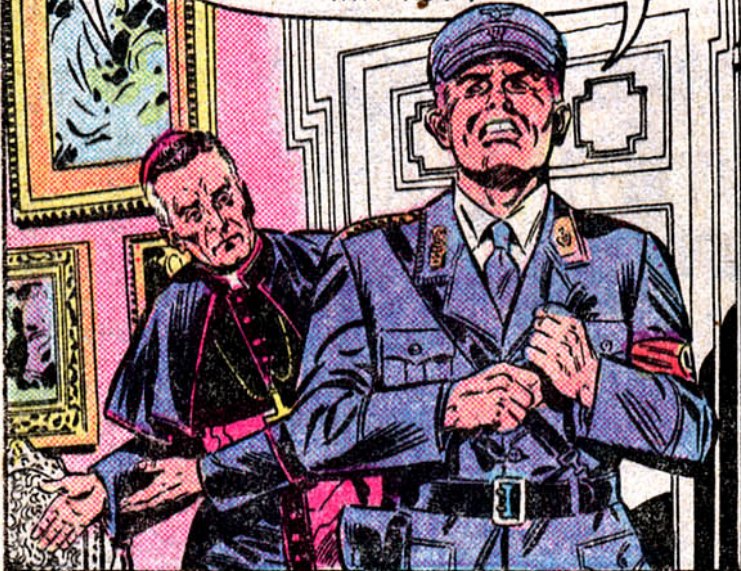


COME IN!

ARCHBISHOP SAPIEHA!
I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS...
ABOUT YOUR SEMINARIANS...

WOULD YOU LIKE SOME TEA?

ONLY ANSWERS, PLEASE. IN 1939, WE GRACIOUSLY ALLOWED THOSE IN SEMINARY TO CONTINUE THEIR STUDIES. NONE HAVE YET GRADUATED, FIVE YEARS LATER. WHY NOT?



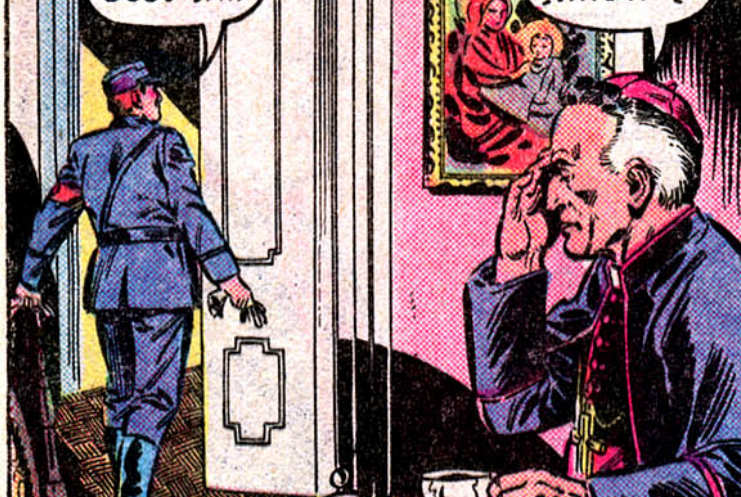
THE STUDIES HAVE BEEN PROLONGED FOR ONE YEAR.



DO NOT POSTPONE THESE GRADUATIONS OVERLONG, ARCHBISHOP --OR WE WILL HAVE A LENGTHIER CHAT, AND ONE NOT NEARLY AS PLEASANT.

GOOD DAY.

WHEW!:

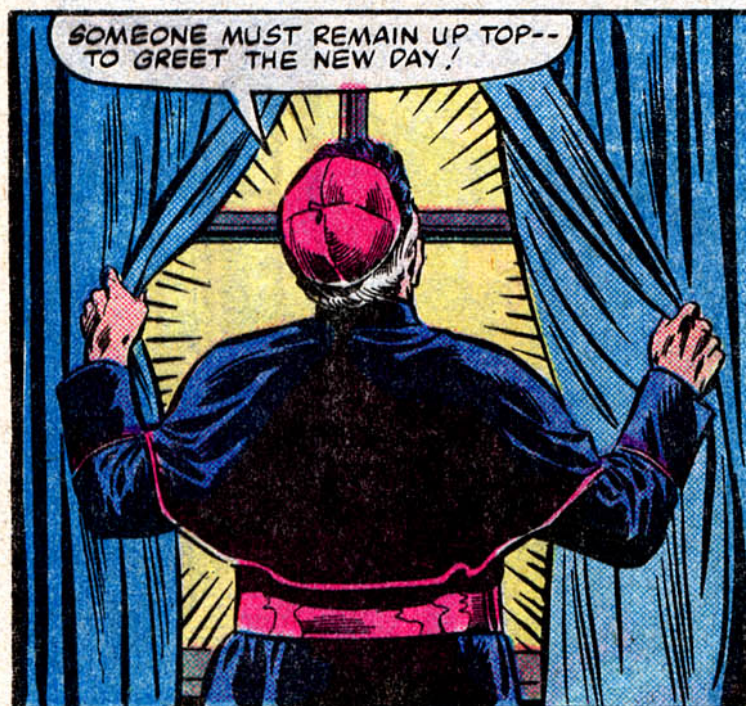


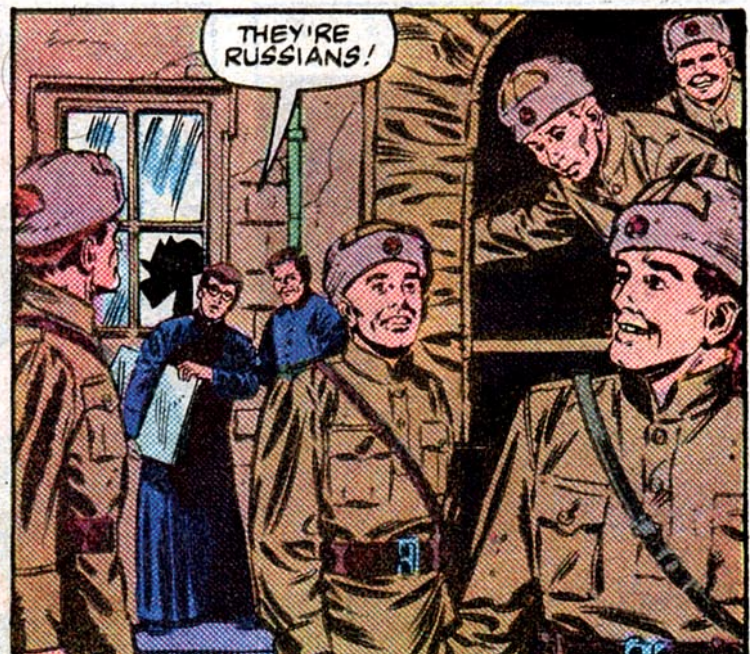
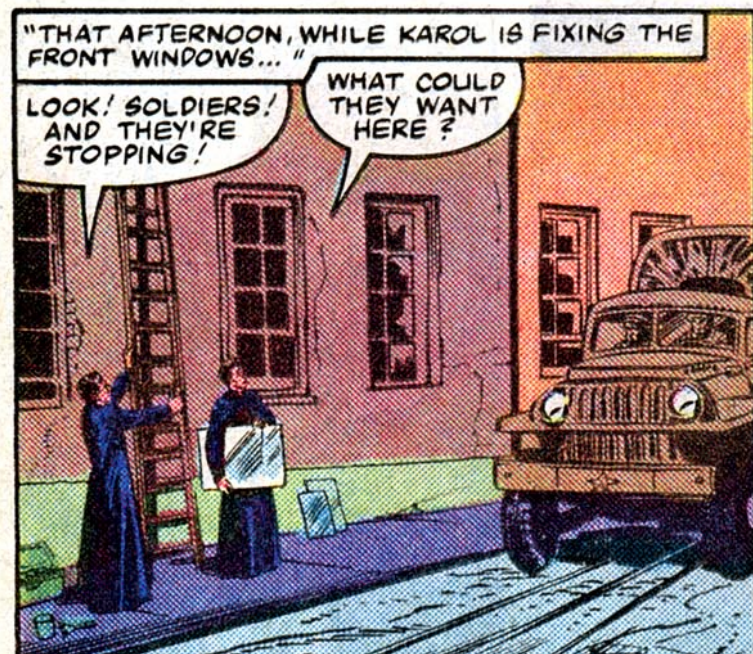
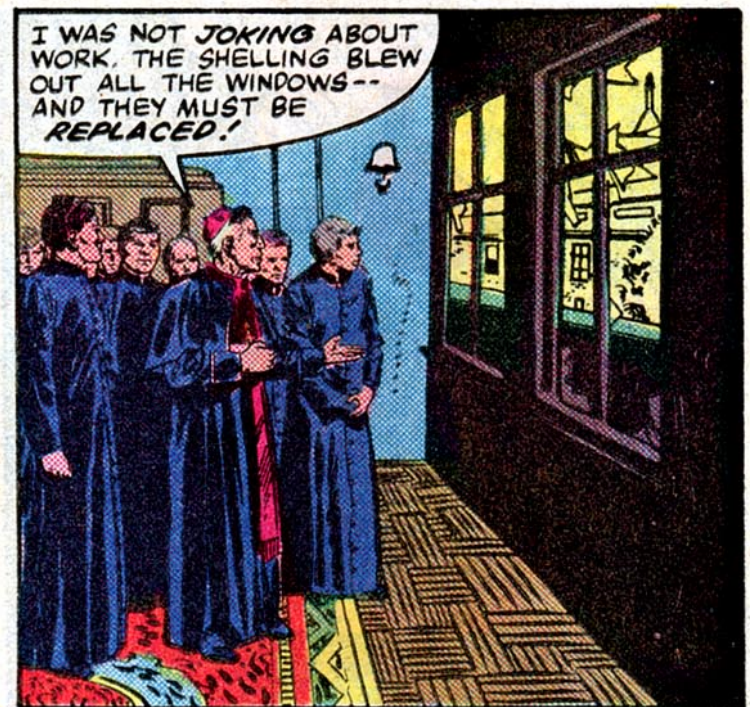
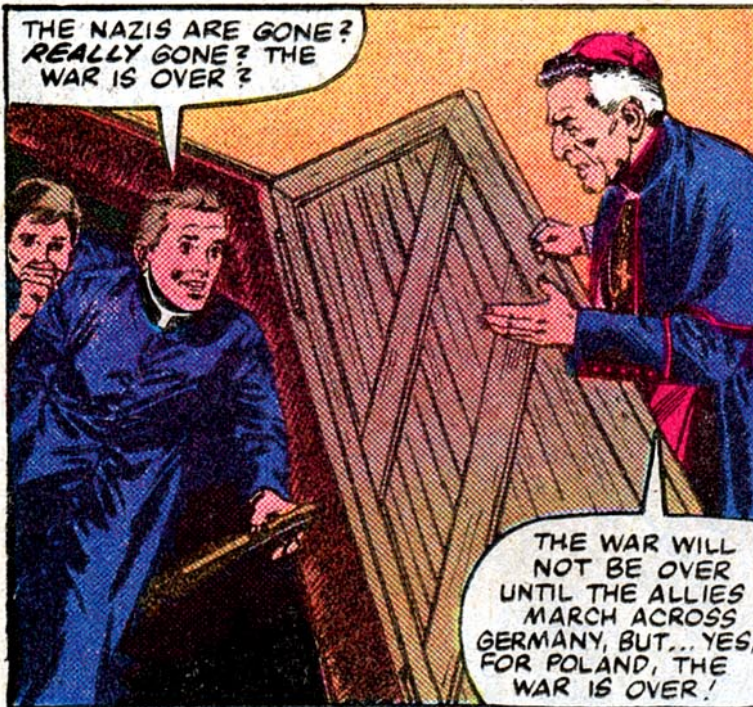
EXCELLENCY! DID THEY--?

NO, THEY KNOW NOTHING OF OUR EXTRA STUDENTS.

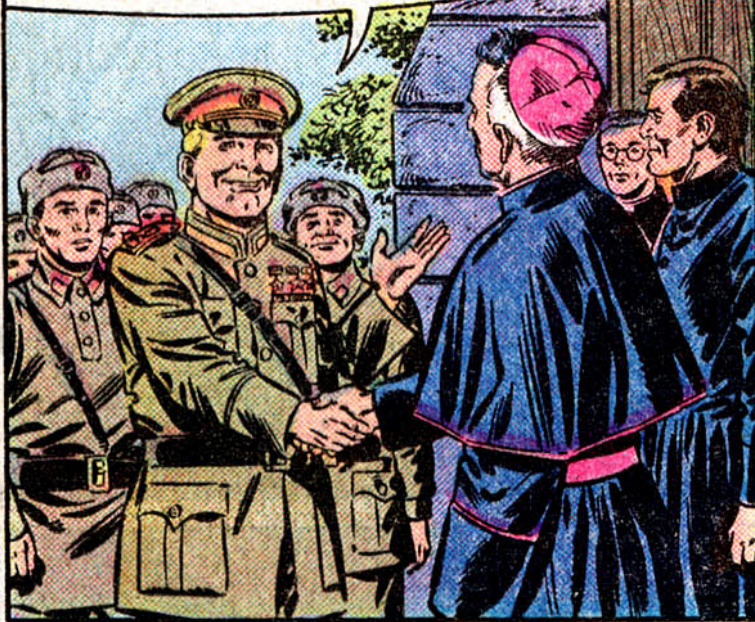
BUT GLIB ANSWERS WON'T SATISFY THEM NEXT TIME-- AND I FEAR IT WILL BE AUSCHWITZ FOR THE LOT OF US!







... I BRING GREETINGS FROM THE SOVIET UNION TO ARCHBISHOP SAPIEHA, *UNCROWNED LEADER* OF THE POLISH PEOPLE!

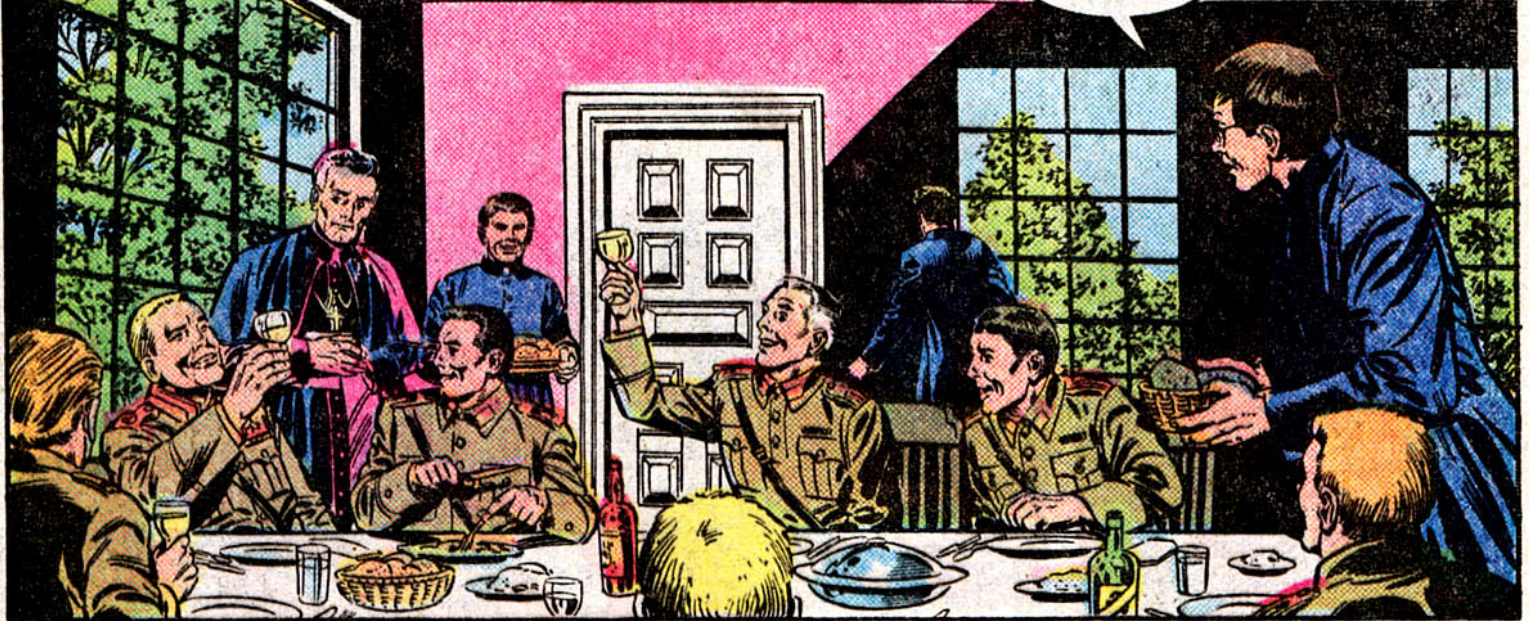


KAROL! MIECZYSLAW! GO HAVE DINNER PREPARED FOR OUR GUESTS!



"SOON, THE ARCHBISHOP'S RESIDENCE IS THE SCENE OF REVELRY, AS POLE AND RUSSIAN CHEER THE LIBERATION OF A LAND..."

KAROL!



WHERE ARE YOU GOING? IS SOMETHING THE MATTER?

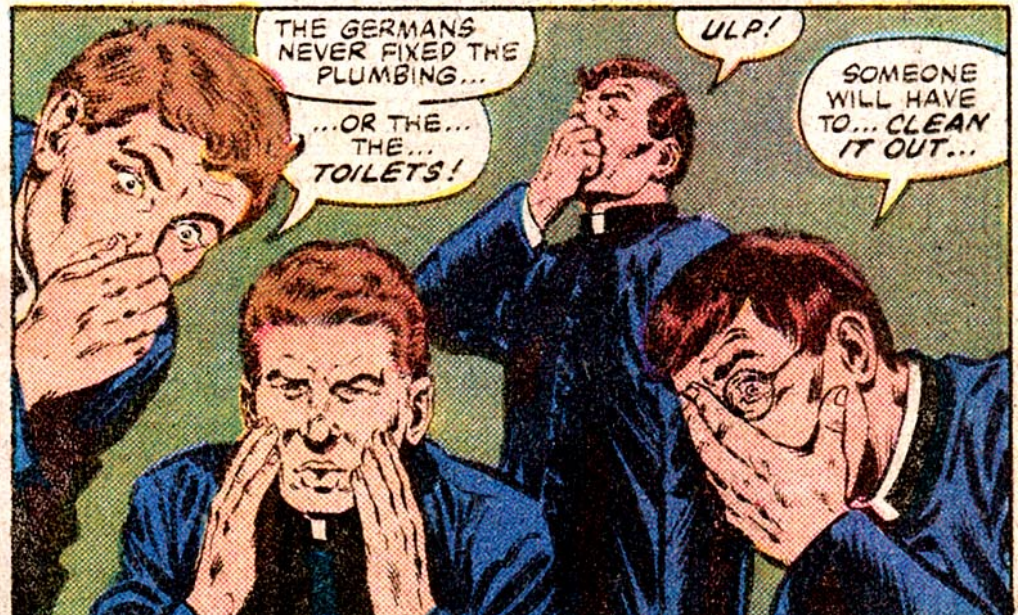
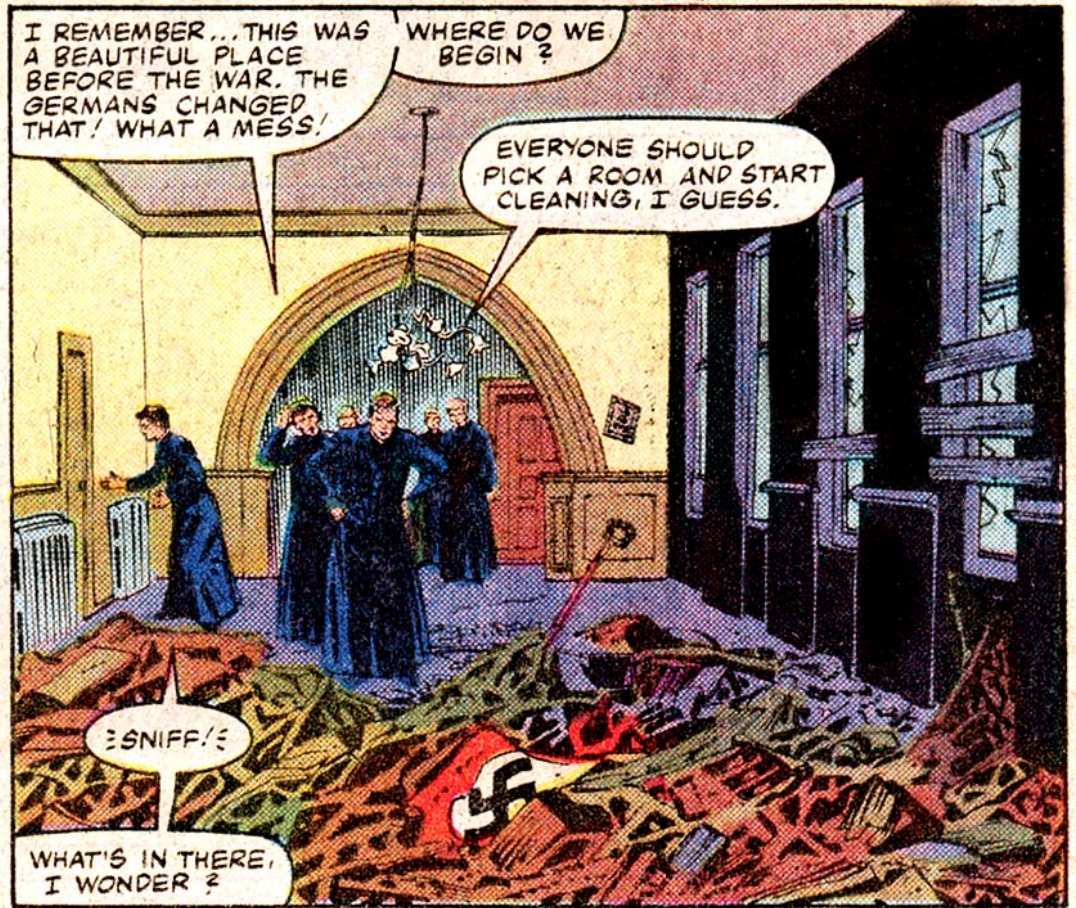
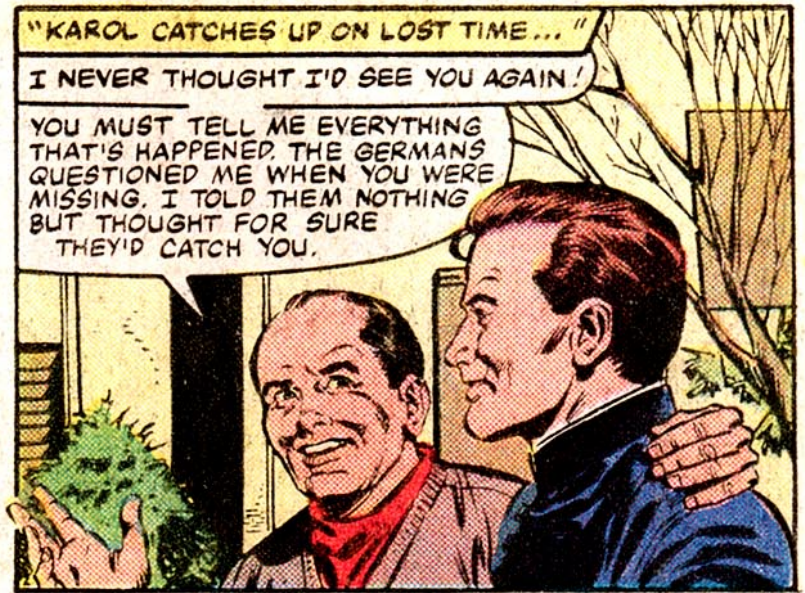
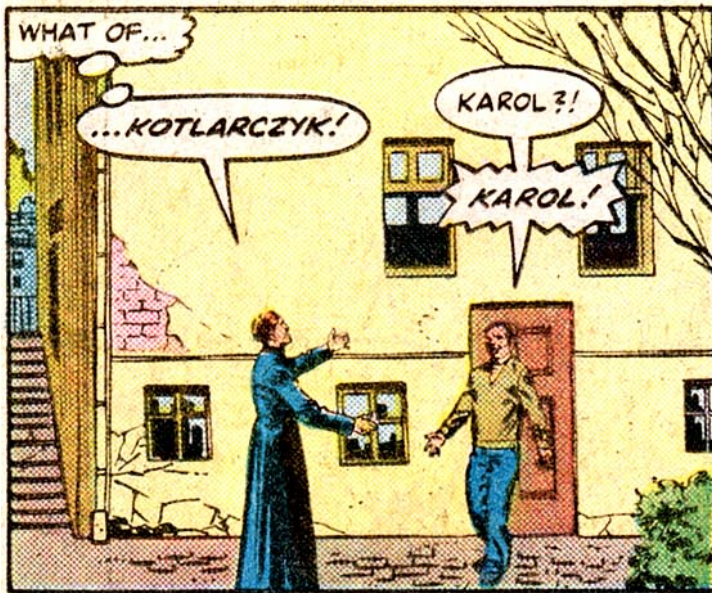
NO, NO... GO AHEAD WITH YOUR PARTY. I WOULD JUST LIKE TO SEE SOME PEOPLE.

IT HAS BEEN SIX MONTHS SINCE I LAST PASSED THROUGH THESE GATES.

THE WORLD HAS CHANGED SO MUCH... AND SO LITTLE. PEOPLE STILL SUFFER FROM THE WAR... SOLDIERS STILL WALK THE STREETS, THOUGH THEY ARE NOW OUR FRIENDS, NOT OUR CONQUERORS.

AND WHAT OF KOTLARCZYK?



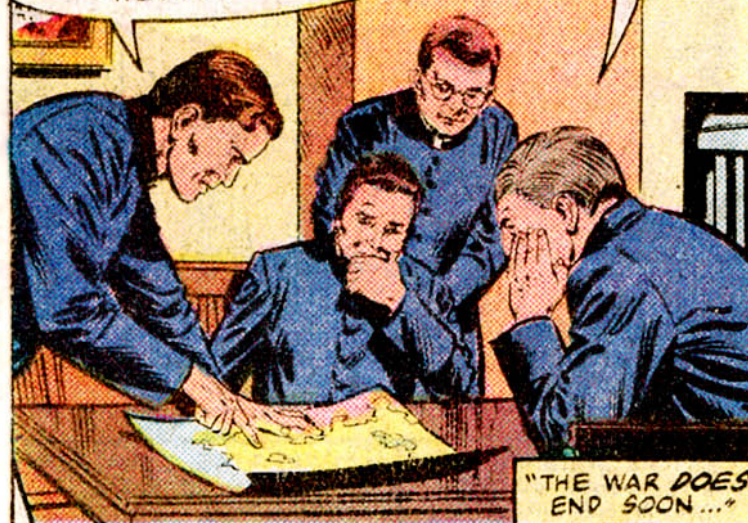




"WITHIN DAYS, THE SEMINARY IS IN WORKING ORDER-- AND THE SEMINARIANS TURN THEIR EYES OPTIMISTICALLY TOWARD THE FUTURE..."

IT WON'T BE LONG NOW! THE SOVIETS HAVE DRIVEN THE GERMANS BACK PAST THEIR OWN BORDERS! ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND AMERICA PUSH INTO GERMANY FROM THE WEST...

LET'S PRAY THE WAR ENDS VERY SOON. THEN THE SOVIETS WILL GO HOME, AND LEAVE POLAND TO ITSELF AGAIN.



"BUT THE SOVIETS DO NOT LEAVE... AND, ONCE AGAIN, POLAND LIVES NOT IN THE HAND OF FREEDOM, BUT IN THE GRIP OF THE CONQUEROR. THE RUSSIANS REFUSE TO LET THE POLISH GOVERNMENT-IN-EXILE RETURN FROM LONDON. INSTEAD, THEY INSTALL THEIR OWN PUPPETS."



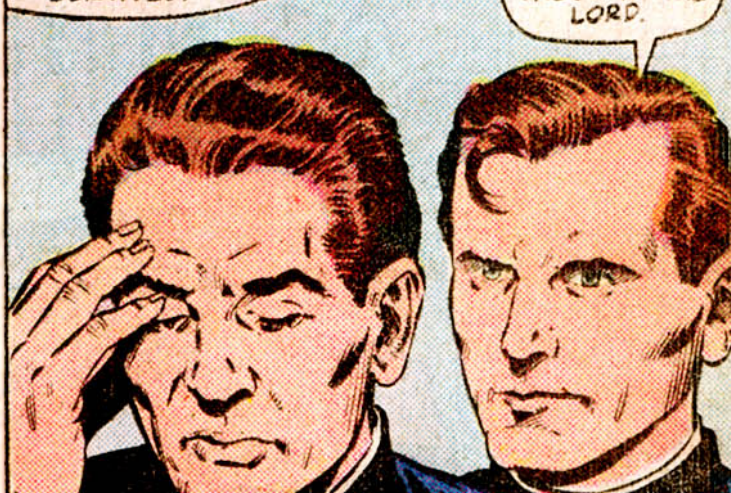
THEY LIED TO US! THE ALLIES SAID THEY WOULD FREE US, BUT THEY SOLD US TO THE RUSSIANS AT POTSDAM AND YALTA! HOW COULD THEY DO IT?



CALM YOURSELF, FRIEND. I, TOO, FIND THIS NEWS DISTRESSING -- BUT THE RULE OF NAZIISM WAS A TRIAL WE SURVIVED.

WE SHALL OUTLIVE A COMMUNIST REIGN AS WELL, AND COME OUT STRONGER FOR IT.

TRUST IN THE LORD.



"NOWHERE IS RESISTANCE TO THE SOVIETS GREATER THAN IN THE CHURCH, FOR POLAND IS LARGELY CATHOLIC. YET, ONE DAY AT THE SEMINARY..."

YOU AT THE DOOR! STOP!

Y-YES? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

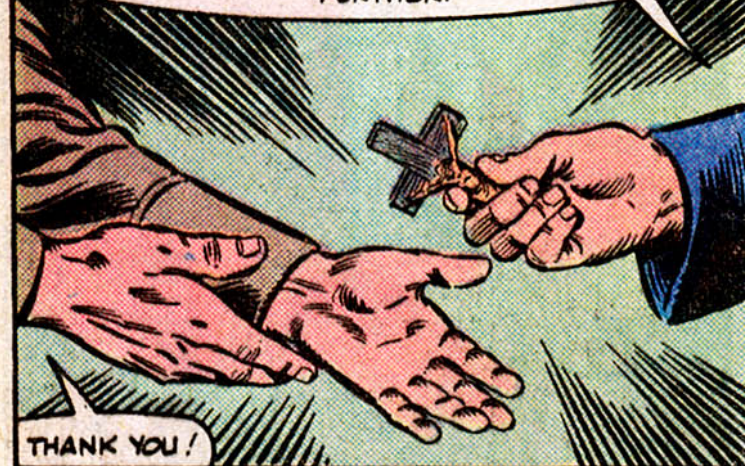


I HAVE SEEN YOUR PRIESTS! I ADMIRE THEM GREATLY, AND I WISH TO KNOW-- MAY I JOIN THE SEMINARY?

I-I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY! BECOMING A PRIEST IS NO EASY THING, NOR SHOULD IT BE UNDERTAKEN LIGHTLY.



TAKE THIS CROSS AS A SYMBOL OF CHRIST'S LOVE-- AND CONSIDER YOUR COURSE OF ACTION. IF YOU TRULY DESIRE TO BECOME A PRIEST, COME BACK AND WE WILL DISCUSS IT FURTHER.



THANK YOU!

"TO KAROL WOJTYLA, THE EVENT IS A SIGN-- A SIGN THAT THE HUMAN SPIRIT CANNOT TRULY BE CRUSHED. IN GOD'S EYES, ALL THINGS ARE POSSIBLE..."

HOW STRANGE ARE GOD'S WAYS! HOW DID THE COMMUNISTS, WHO SEEK TO STAMP OUT RELIGION AND HOLY WORSHIP, EVER PRODUCE ONE SO HUNGRY FOR GOD?



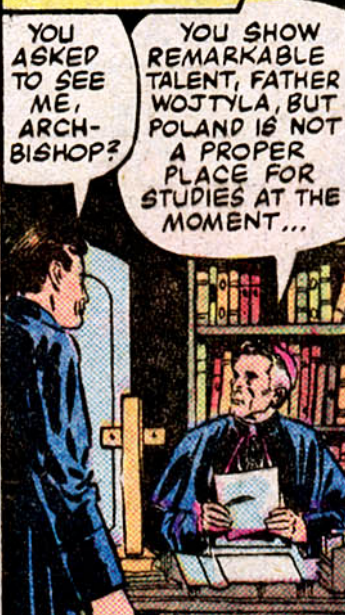
"THEN, WEEKS LATER, KAROL REACHES THE GOAL OF HIS STUDIES-- HE IS ORDAINED BY THE ARCHBISHOP AS A PRIEST IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH..."



"YET ARCHBISHOP SAPIEHA HAS NOTICED SOMETHING GREAT IN THIS YOUNG PRIEST, AND KAROL IS CALLED BEFORE HIM..."

YOU ASKED TO SEE ME, ARCHBISHOP?

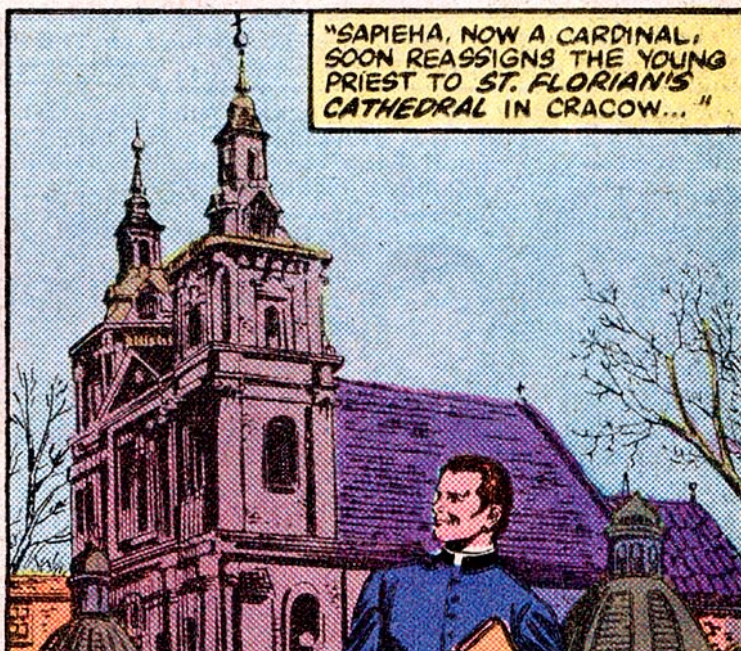
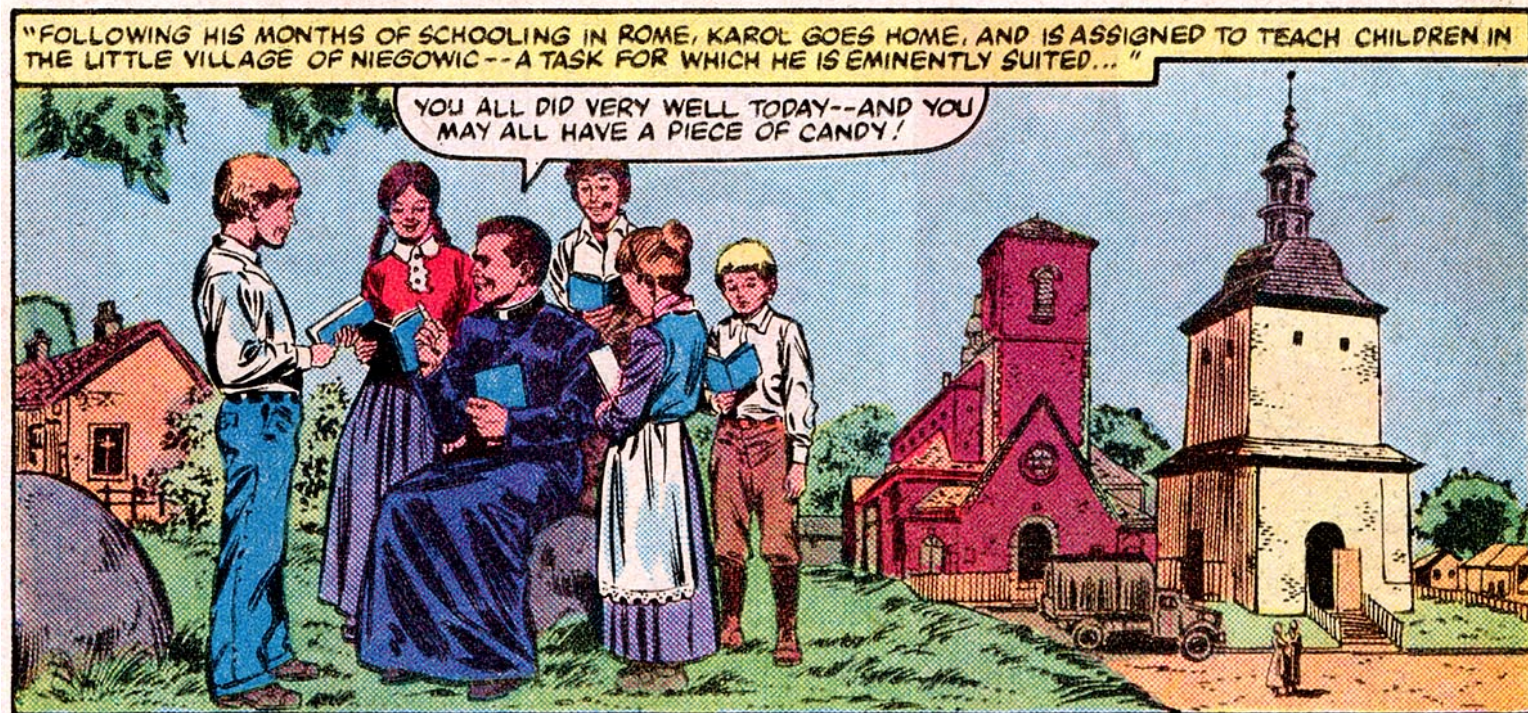
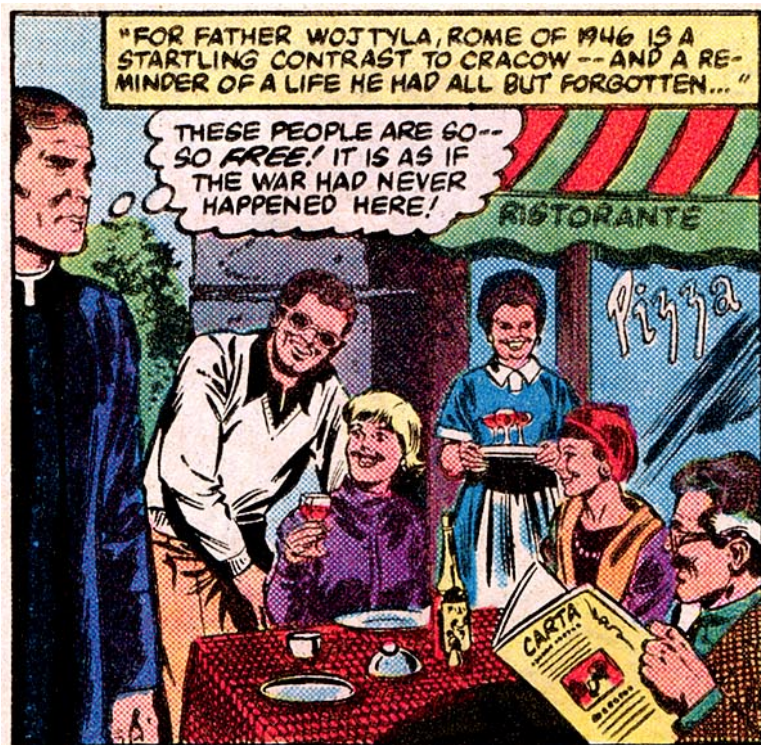
YOU SHOW REMARKABLE TALENT, FATHER WOJTYLA, BUT POLAND IS NOT A PROPER PLACE FOR STUDIES AT THE MOMENT...

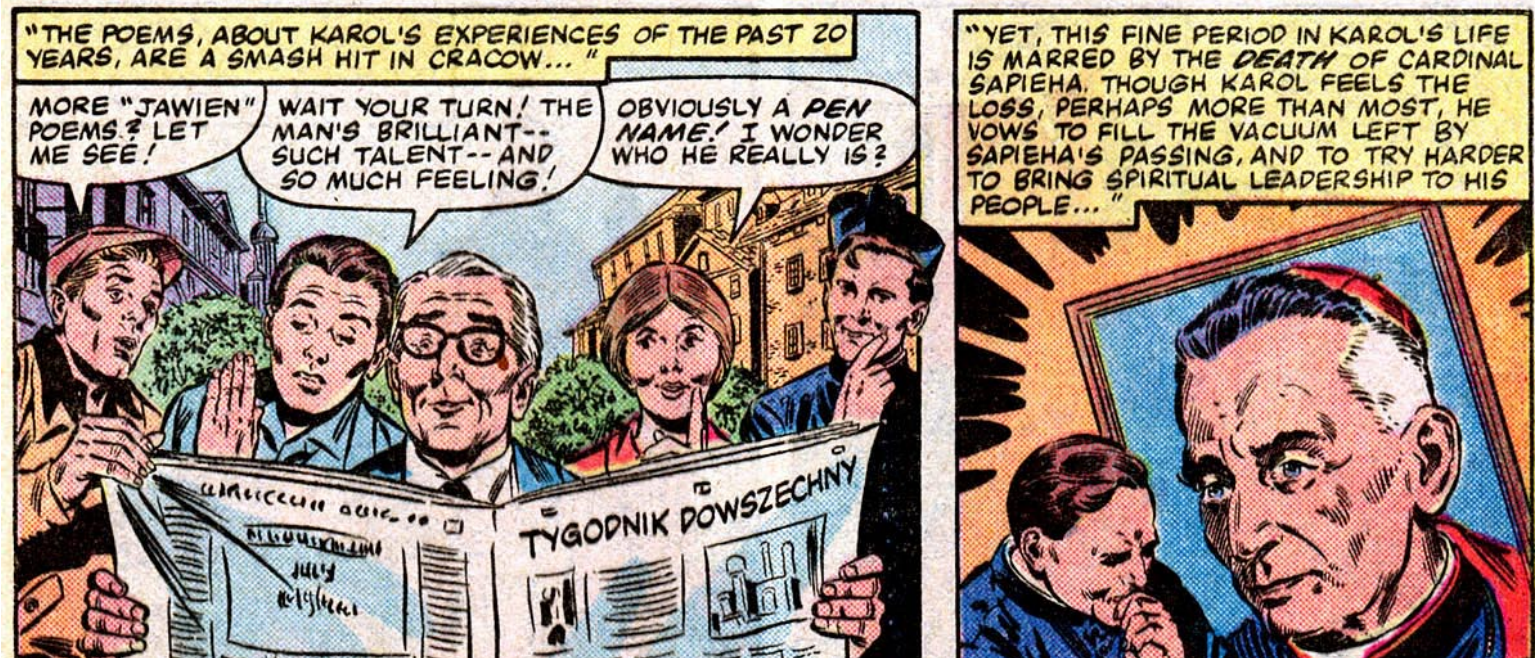
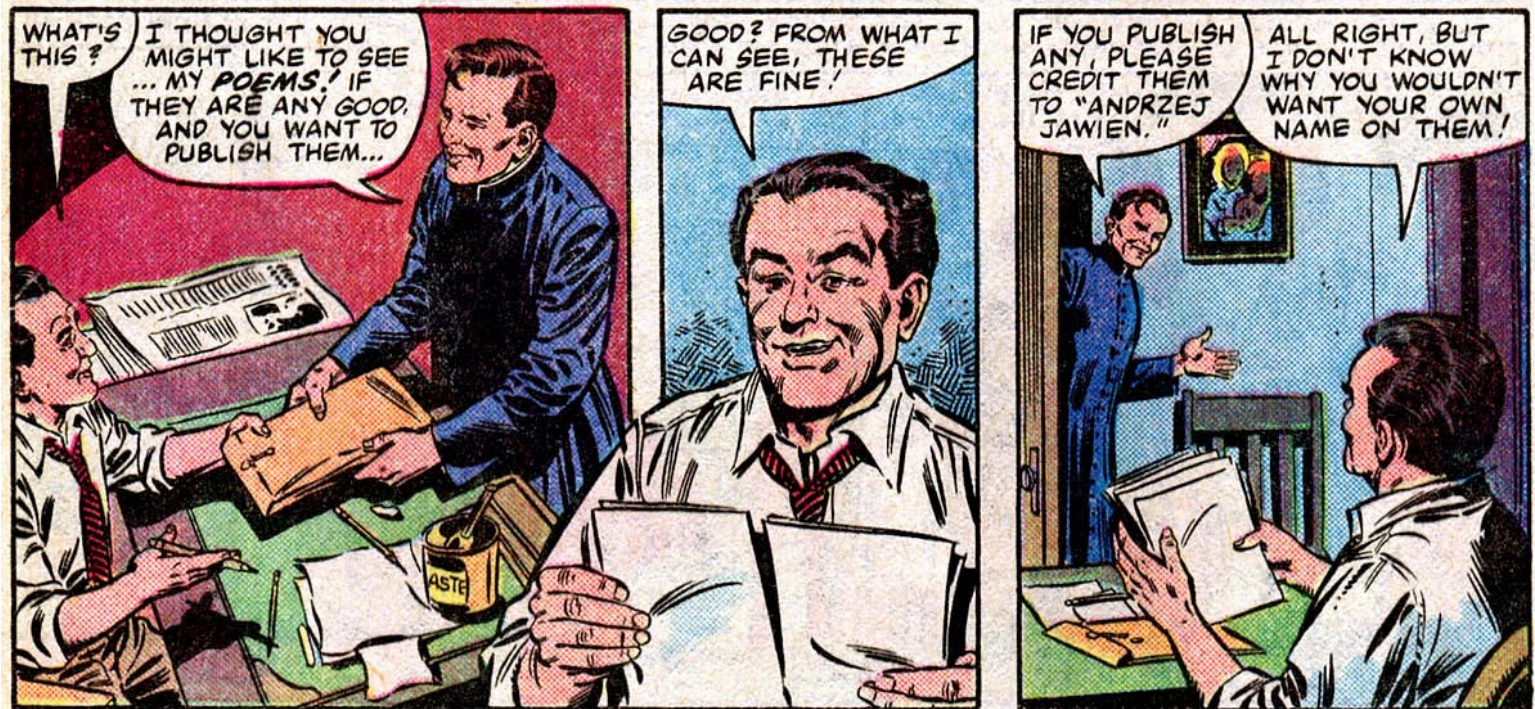
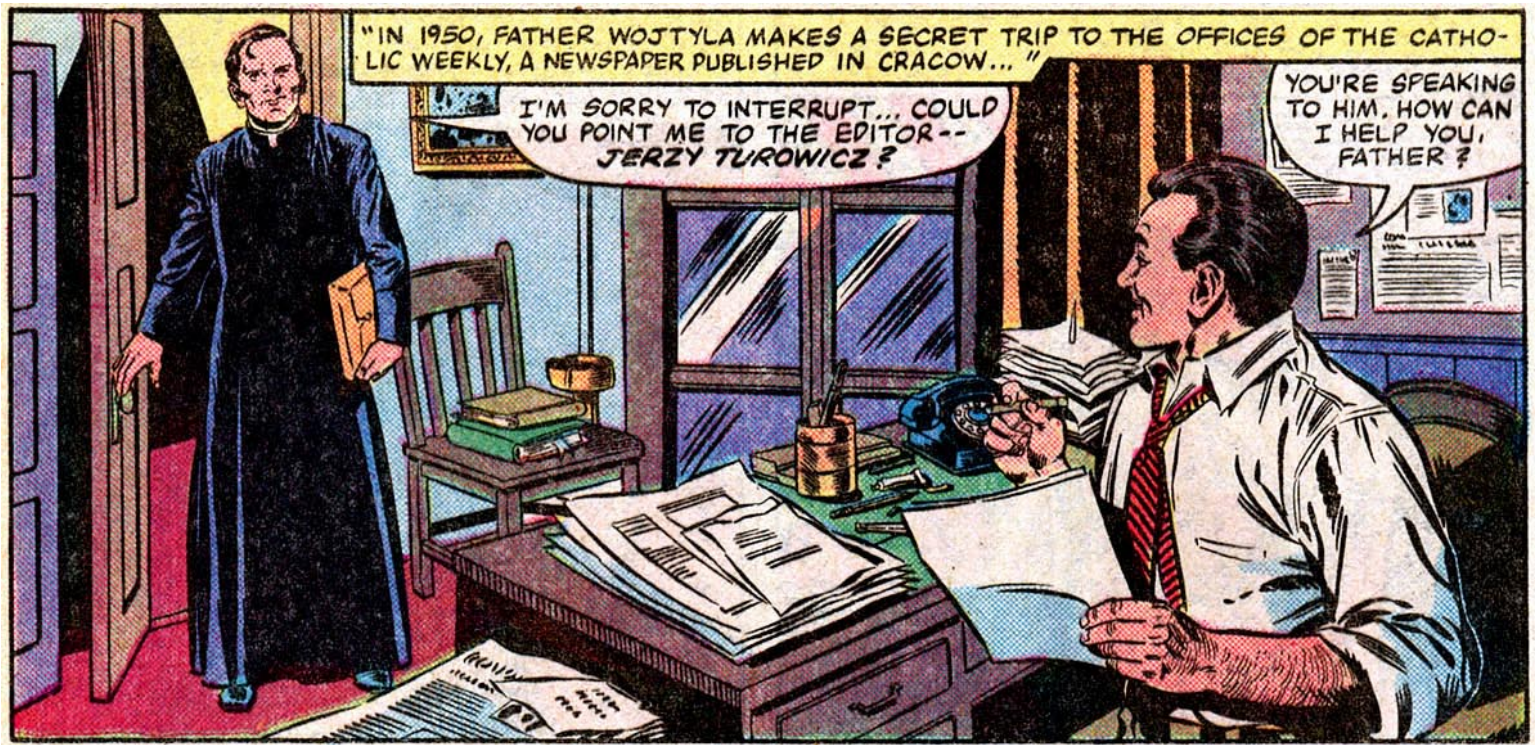


THEREFORE, I AM SENDING YOU TO ROME, WHERE YOU MIGHT TRULY BE PUT TO THE TEST.

ROME?!







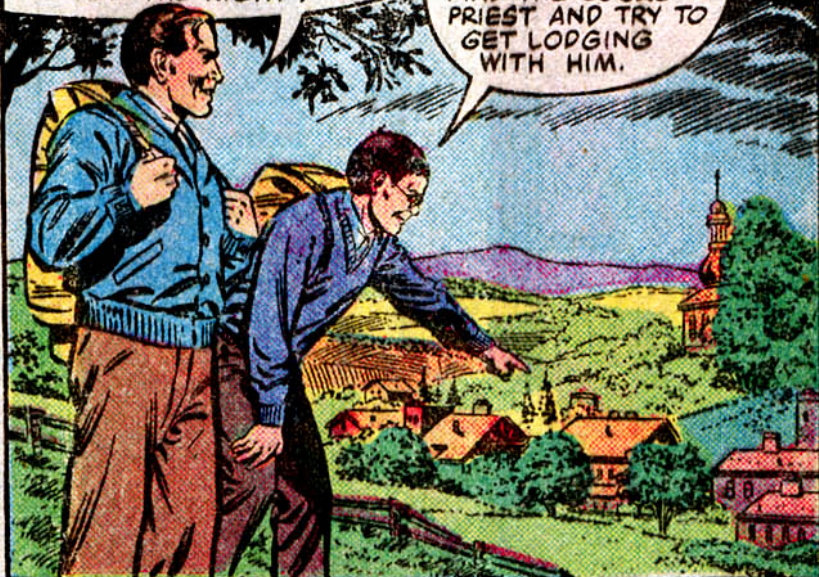
"AT ST. FLORIAN'S, AND LATER AT ST. CATHERINE'S, KAROL EMPHASIZES OUTINGS-- SKIING IN THE WINTER, HIKING IN THE SUMMER--FOR HIS YOUNG PARISHIONERS..."



"HE FREQUENTLY TAKES SABBATICALS HIMSELF, ALONE OR IN THE COMPANY OF CLOSE FRIENDS..."

IT'S GETTING LATE, MIOTEK! SHOULDN'T WE SET UP CAMP FOR THE NIGHT?

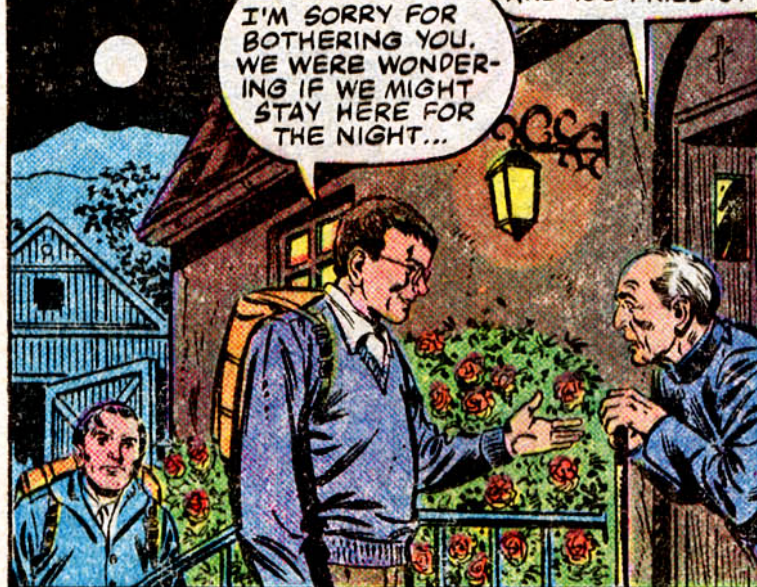
THERE'S A TOWN DOWN THERE. LET'S FIND THE LOCAL PRIEST AND TRY TO GET LODGING WITH HIM.



"HOWEVER, AT THE HOUSE..."

STAY HERE?! ARE YOU PRIESTS?

I'M SORRY FOR BOTHERING YOU. WE WERE WONDERING IF WE MIGHT STAY HERE FOR THE NIGHT...



PRIESTS! TRAVELLING WITHOUT CASSOCKS?! IT'S DISGRACEFUL! NO WONDER RESPECT FOR THE CLERGY IS THREATENED! SLEEP IN THE BARN IF YOU'RE TIRED--I WON'T HAVE YOUR KIND IN MY HOUSE!

AND BE GLAD I DON'T REPORT YOU TO THE BISHOP!



I ALWAYS SAID YOU WERE A DISGRACE TO THE CLERGY, WOJTYLA! ALL THESE NEW WAYS! WON'T DO AT ALL!

YOU TOO, MALINSKI! BOTHERING A POOR OLD MAN LIKE THAT! ETSK! E

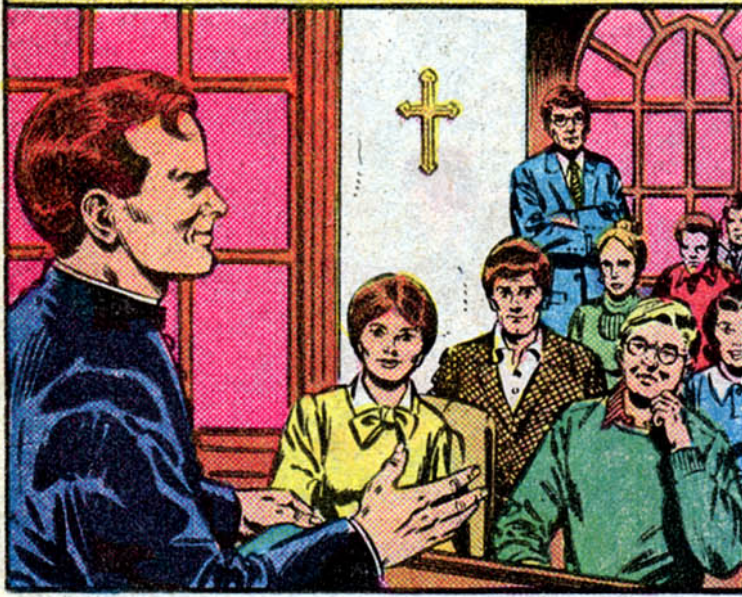


HA! HA!

HA! HA! HA!



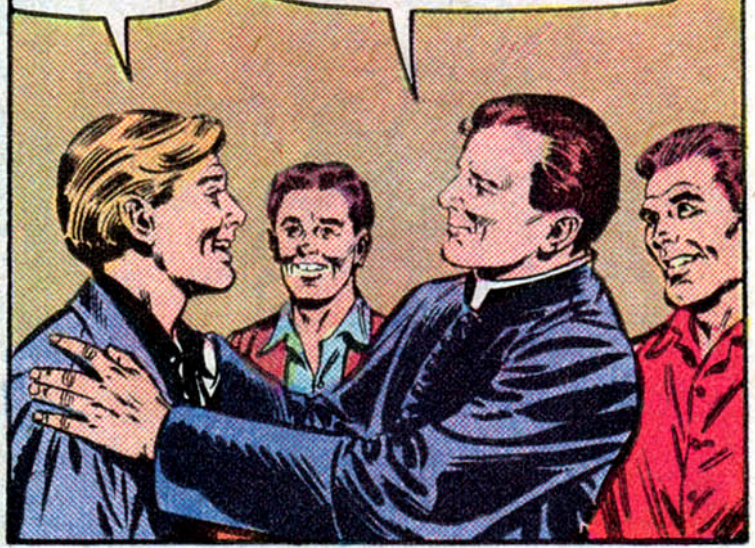
"DESPITE SUSPICION BY OLDER PRIESTS AND EVEN THE NEW PRIMATE OF POLAND, **CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI**, FATHER WOJTYLA SEEKS FOR NEW WAYS TO SPREAD CATHOLICISM, EVEN AS HE LECTURES AT SEMINARY AND AT THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY AT LUBLIN..."



"FOR HE PERCEIVES THAT THE TIMES ARE CHANGING, AND THE CHURCH MUST CHANGE WITH THEM... OR DIE..."

FATHER? DO YOU REMEMBER ME-- **GEORGE CIESIELSKI**?

GEORGE! OF COURSE! YOU'VE SERVED AT MASS FOR ME-- AND YOU'VE BEEN ON SOME OF MY OUTINGS! HOW ARE YOU?



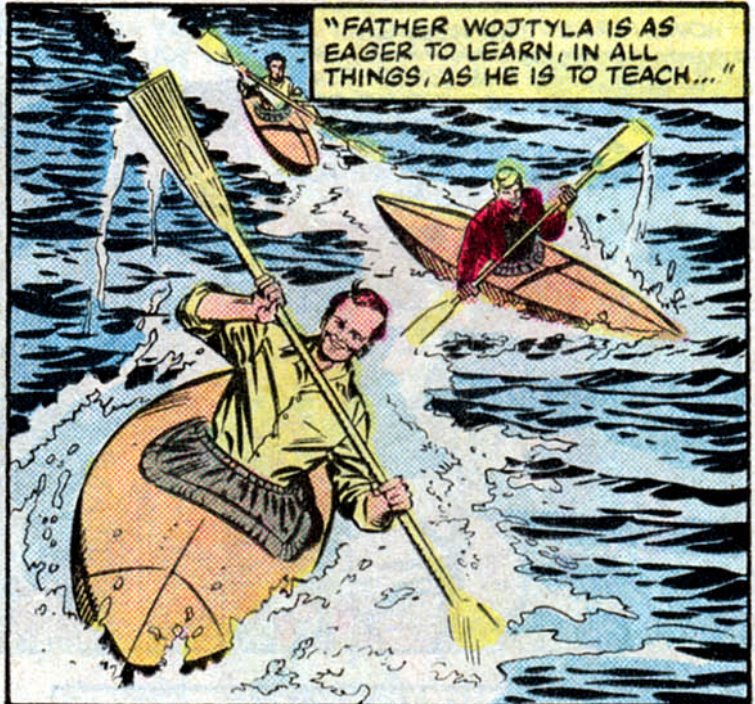
I WAS WONDERING, FATHER-- I HEARD YOU WERE AN AVID HIKER AND SKIER, AND YOU LIKE A GOOD GAME OF SOCCER...

KAYAKING? HMM!

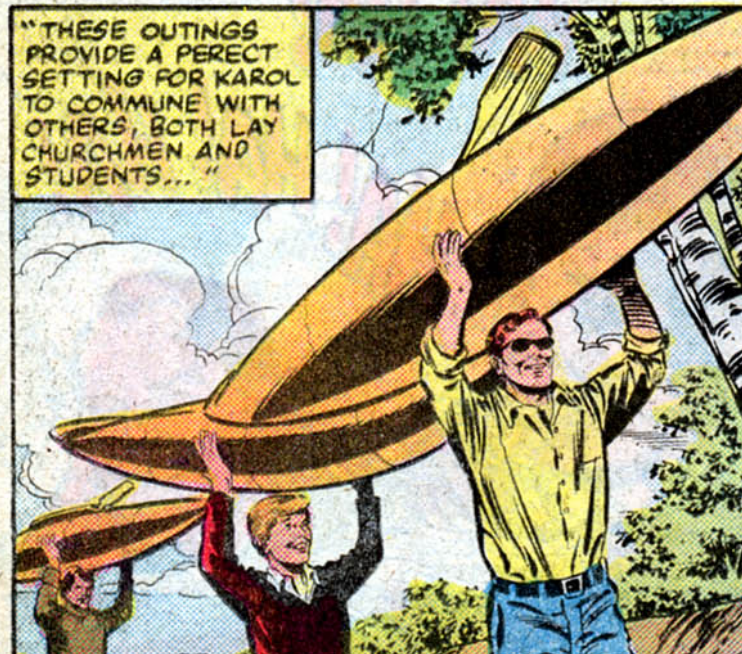
HAVE YOU EVER TRIED KAYAKING?



"FATHER WOJTYLA IS AS EAGER TO LEARN, IN ALL THINGS, AS HE IS TO TEACH..."

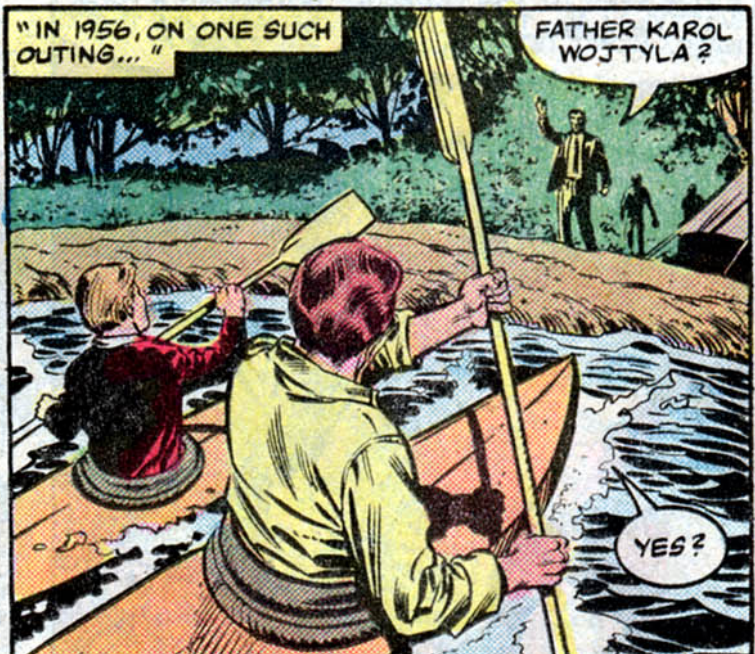


"THESE OUTINGS PROVIDE A PERFECT SETTING FOR KAROL TO COMMUNE WITH OTHERS, BOTH LAY CHURCHMEN AND STUDENTS..."



"IN 1956, ON ONE SUCH OUTING..."

FATHER KAROL WOJTYLA?



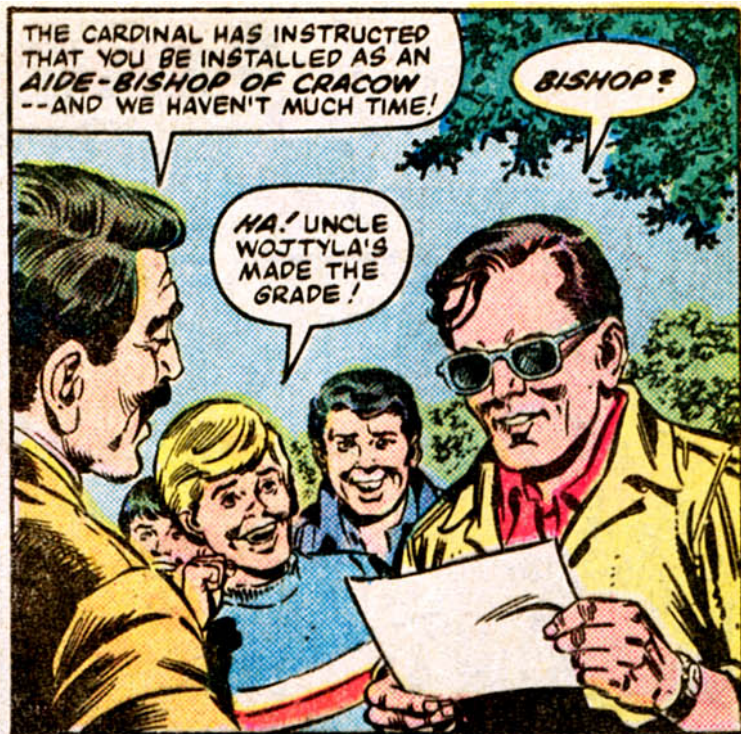
YES?



WE COME ALL THE WAY UP HERE BY ORDER OF CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI HIMSELF-- AND THEN YOU MAKE US LOOK FOR YOU! WHAT IS THE MATTER WITH YOU?

THE CARDINAL SENT YOU? WHY? IS SOMETHING WRONG?

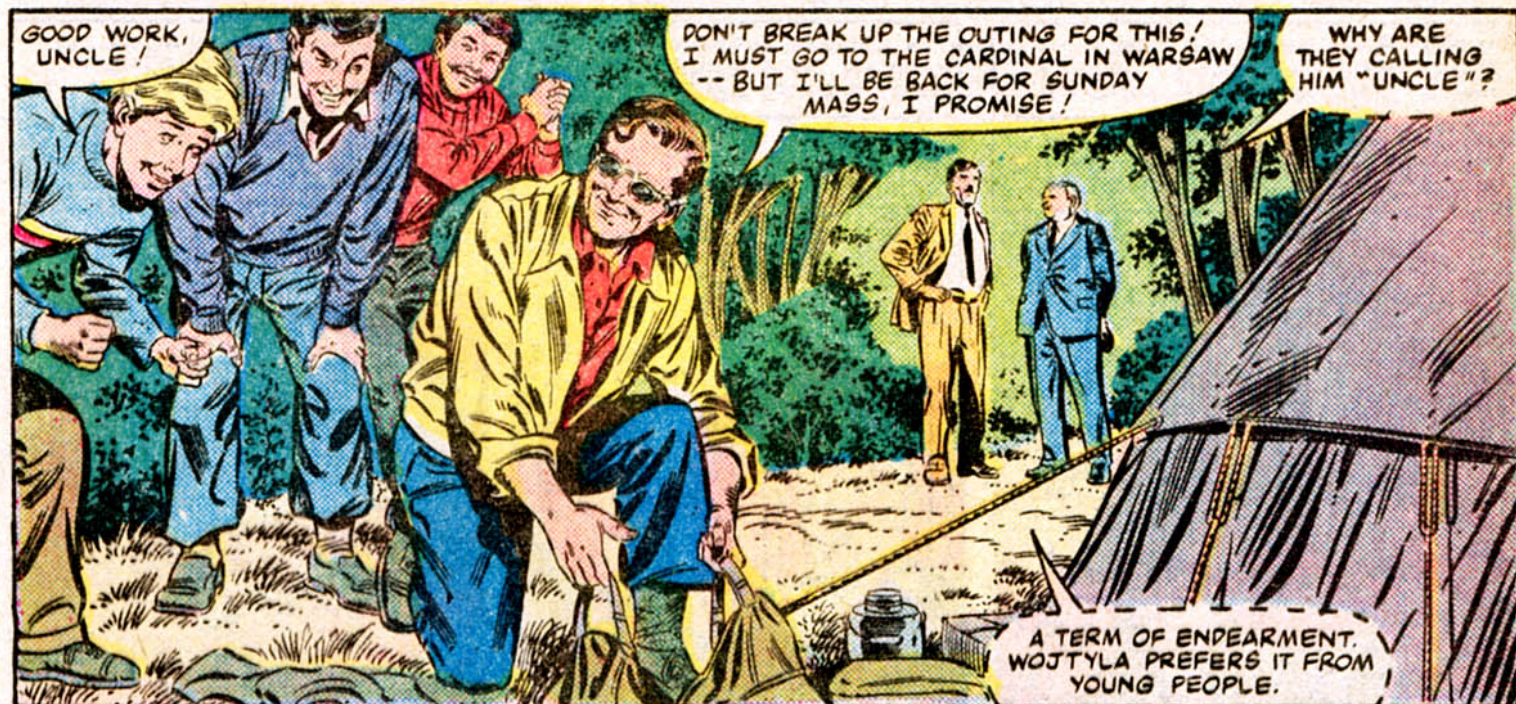
IT DEPENDS ON YOUR POINT OF VIEW, FATHER...



THE CARDINAL HAS INSTRUCTED THAT YOU BE INSTALLED AS AN AIDE-BISHOP OF CRACOW --AND WE HAVEN'T MUCH TIME!

BISHOP?

HA! UNCLE WOJTYLA'S MADE THE GRADE!

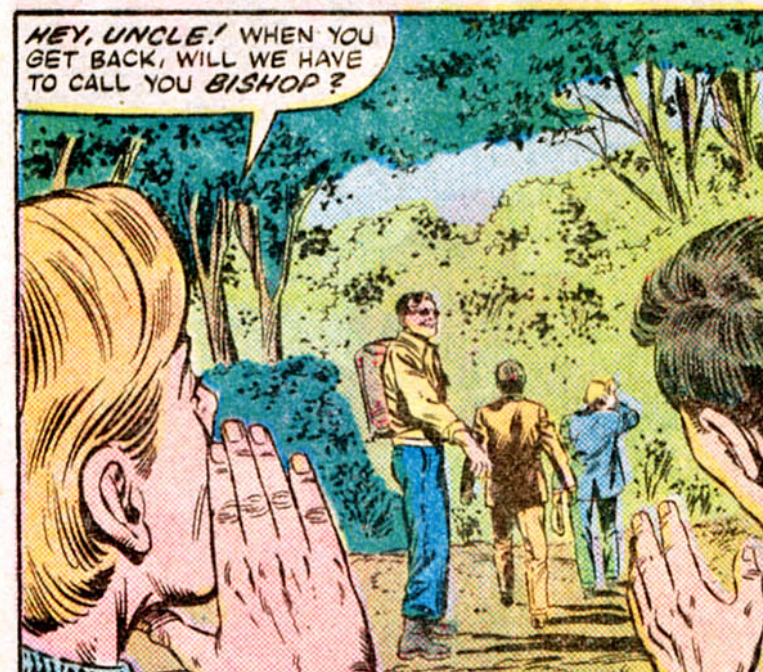


GOOD WORK, UNCLE!

DON'T BREAK UP THE OUTING FOR THIS! I MUST GO TO THE CARDINAL IN WARSAW -- BUT I'LL BE BACK FOR SUNDAY MASS, I PROMISE!

WHY ARE THEY CALLING HIM "UNCLE"?

A TERM OF ENDEARMENT. WOJTYLA PREFERS IT FROM YOUNG PEOPLE.

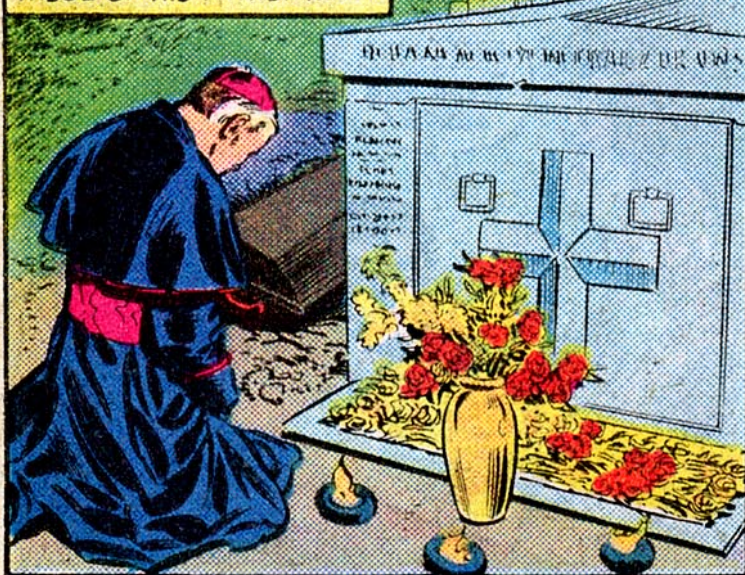


HEY, UNCLE! WHEN YOU GET BACK, WILL WE HAVE TO CALL YOU BISHOP?



CALL ME... UNCLE!

"AS BISHOP, KAROL WOJTYLA FINALLY SEES THE FULFILLMENT OF A DREAM-- TO HAVE HIS MOTHER'S REMAINS BROUGHT TO CRACOW TO REST BESIDE THOSE OF HIS FATHER..."



"THOUGH STILL LOW IN THE RANKS OF POLISH BISHOPS, KAROL'S THOUGHTS ARE IN TUNE WITH THE TIMES--AND, IN ROME, POPE JOHN XXIII CALLS THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL, TO BEGIN THE MODERNIZATION OF CATHOLICISM..."

"BISHOP WOJTYLA COMES TO THIS COUNCIL AS AIDE TO BISHOP EUGENE BAZIAK, OFFICIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE POLISH CHURCH..."



"HERE, FOR THE FIRST TIME, BISHOP WOJTYLA TRULY GRASPS THE INTERNATIONAL MEANING OF CATHOLICISM..."

"HERE, HE FEELS A GREAT EXCITEMENT, AS IF ON THE VERGE OF A GREAT ADVENTURE..."



"IN LEISURE MOMENTS IN THE VATICAN, HE SPEAKS WITH AS MANY BISHOPS AS POSSIBLE..."

YOU AGREE, THEN, THAT CATHOLICISM MIGHT BE ADOPTED TO THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF SPECIFIC PEOPLES?

YES--AND MY OWN AFRICA IS A CASE IN POINT. ONLY WE CAN SPECIFY WHAT IS NEEDED FOR OUR CULTURE -- WHILE THE VATICAN SHOULD TELL US WHEN WE'VE GONE TOO FAR...



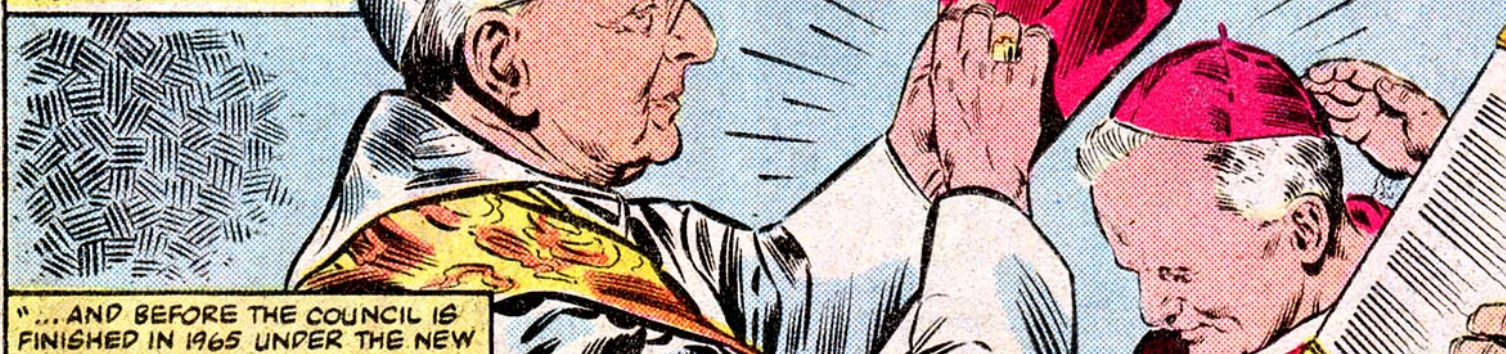
"BISHOP WOJTYLA SPEAKS WITH THE TONGUE OF A PHILOSOPHER, LISTENS WITH THE EAR OF A STUDENT..."

"AND HIS RETURN TO ROME CULMINATES IN A SPEECH BEFORE THE ASSEMBLY--A SPEECH THAT BEGINS HIS TRANSFORMATION FROM BISHOP OF POLAND TO MAN OF THE WORLD..."

...AND I SAY: INCREASE YOUR TIES WITH THE LAITY--FOR THEY ARE THE STRENGTH OF OUR RELIGION!



"AFTER HIS RETURN TO CRACOW, BISHOP WOJTYLA IS SADDENED TO HEAR OF THE DEATH OF POPE JOHN XXIII--FOR THE MAN HAD OPENED DOORS FOR HIM..."



"...AND BEFORE THE COUNCIL IS FINISHED IN 1965 UNDER THE NEW

"THE RETURN TO ROME FOR THE THIRD SESSION OF THE ECUMENICAL COUNCIL RENEWS ARCHBISHOP WOJTYLA'S EXCITEMENT. HE ALREADY SEES HIS VIEWS BECOMING POLICY..."

DO YOU THINK WE HAVE A CHANCE THIS TIME-- THAT POPE JOHN'S THEORIES OF CHANGE WILL BE REALIZED?

HIS VOICE WAS A NEW WIND AT THE TIME-- BUT NOW HIS WISDOM IS CLEAR TO MOST. JOHN WAS A PROPHET, WHILE PAUL IS A THEORETICAL THINKER



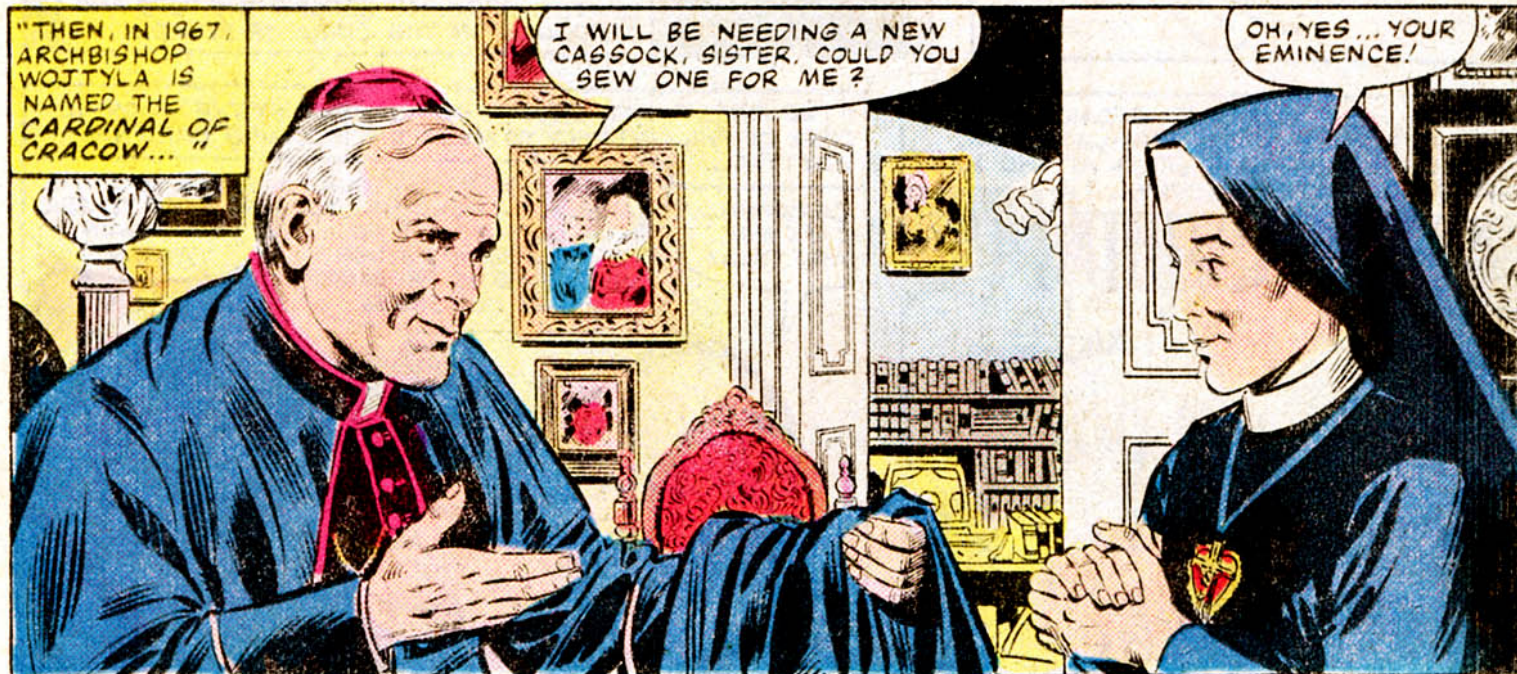
YES, I'D SAY WE HAVE A CHANCE!



"THEN, IN 1967, ARCHBISHOP WOJTYLA IS NAMED THE CARDINAL OF CRACOW..."

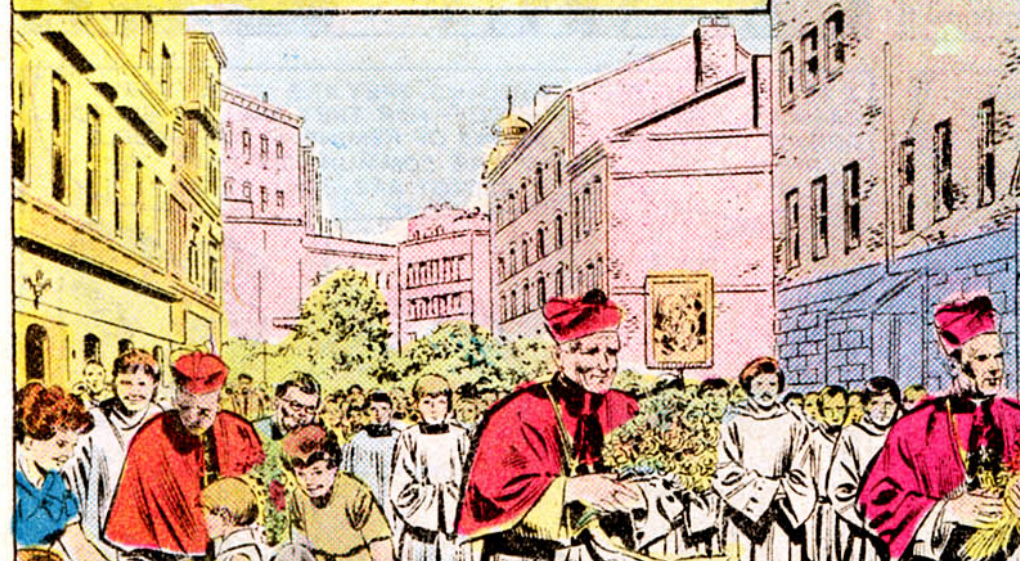
I WILL BE NEEDING A NEW CASSOCK, SISTER. COULD YOU SEW ONE FOR ME?

OH, YES... YOUR EMINENCE!

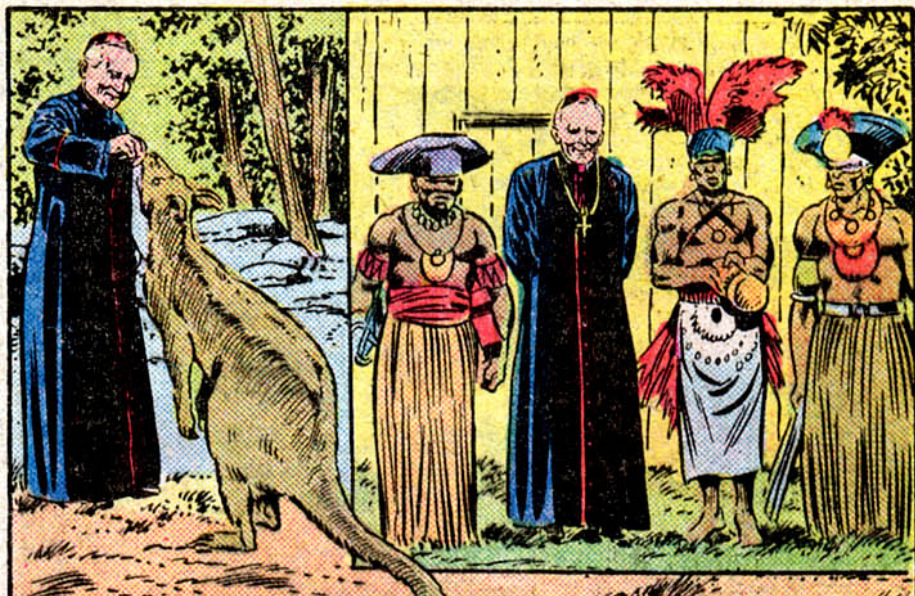


"NOW KAROL WOJTYLA IS AT THE PINNACLE OF THE POLISH CHURCH. ONLY CARDINAL PRIMATE WYSZYNSKI IS HIGHER-- AND ALL AGREE THAT THE LIFE OF THE PRIMATE IS NOT FOR WOJTYLA..."

"NOW, TRULY, KAROL WOJTYLA IS THE SPIRITUAL LEADER OF HIS NATION..."



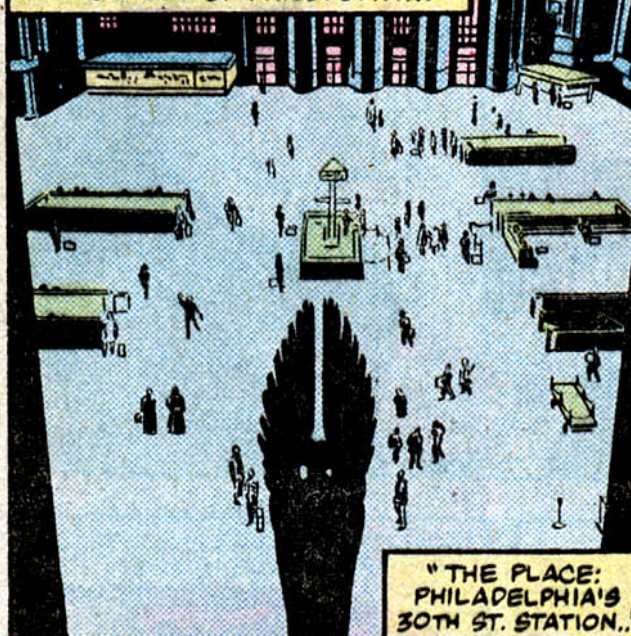
"THE NEXT DECADE IS A PERIOD OF TRAVEL FOR CARDINAL WOJTYLA. HE SKIS IN THE TATRA MOUNTAINS, AND THOUGH HE IS IN HIS 40s, HIS TASTE FOR SPORTS HAS NOT FLAGGED..."



"ATTENDING THE INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS, HE VISITS AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND IN 1973..."

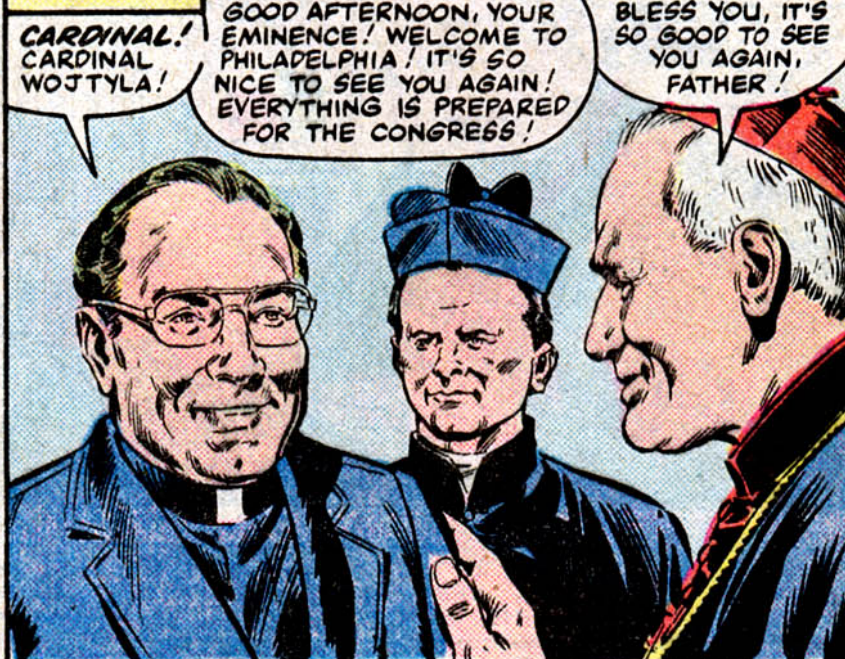
"IN 1976, CARDINAL WOJTYLA GIVES THE LENTEN SERMONS BEFORE THE POPE AND CARDINALS IN THE CURIA OF ROME..."

"IN 1976, HE IS INVITED TO SPEAK AT THE EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS IN PHILADELPHIA, BEFORE WHICH HE IS TO SPEAK AT THE HARVARD SCHOOL OF PHILOSOPHY..."



"THE PLACE: PHILADELPHIA'S 30TH ST. STATION..."

"THE PRIEST: FATHER WITKOWSKI, SENT BY THE ARCHDIOCESE OF PHILADELPHIA TO MEET THE INCOMING CARDINAL WOJTYLA..."

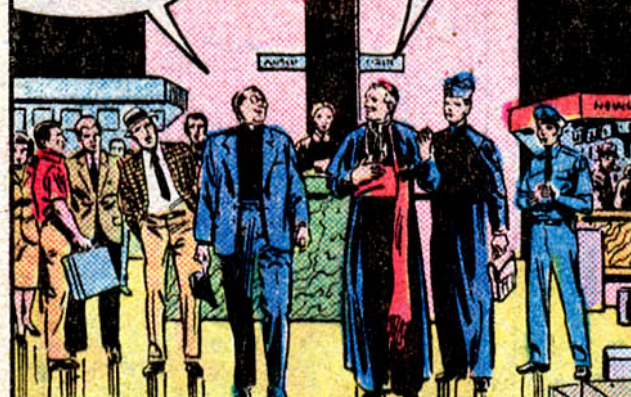


CARDINAL! CARDINAL WOJTYLA!

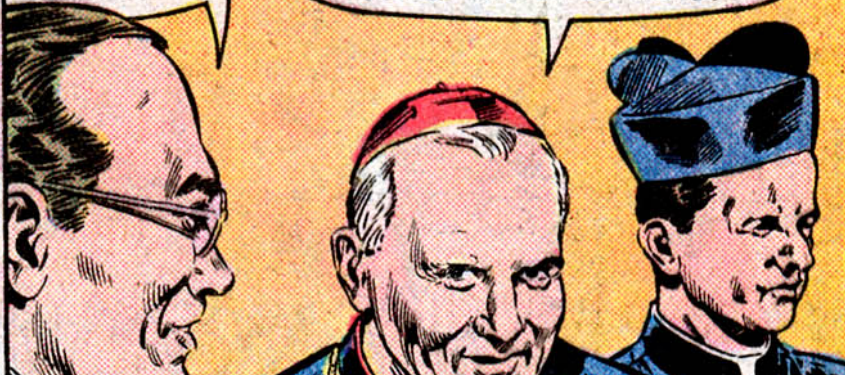
GOOD AFTERNOON, YOUR EMINENCE! WELCOME TO PHILADELPHIA! IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN! EVERYTHING IS PREPARED FOR THE CONGRESS!

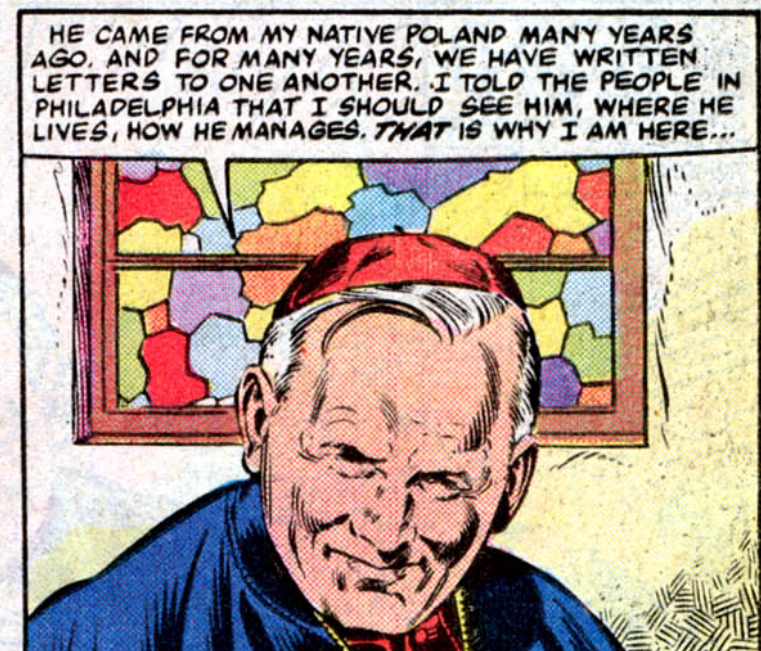
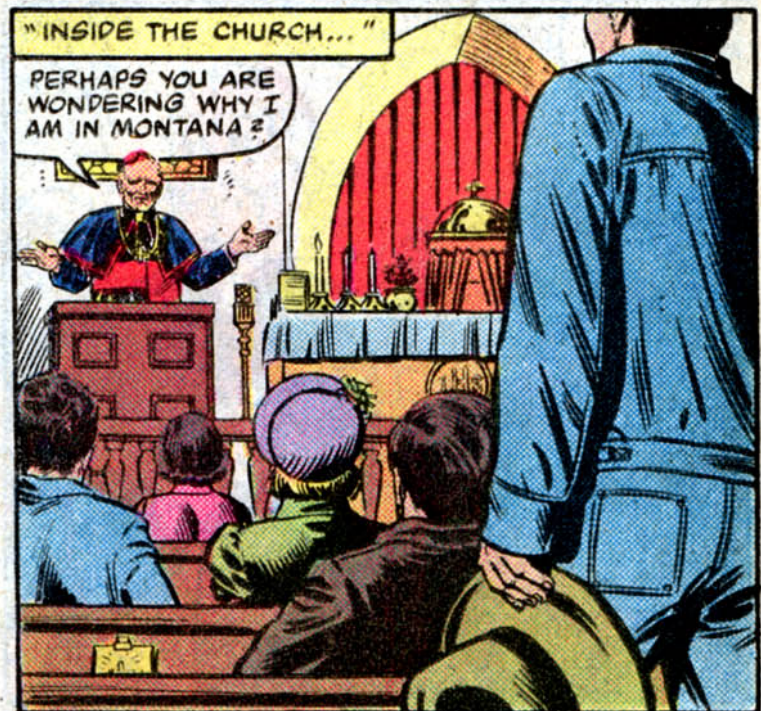
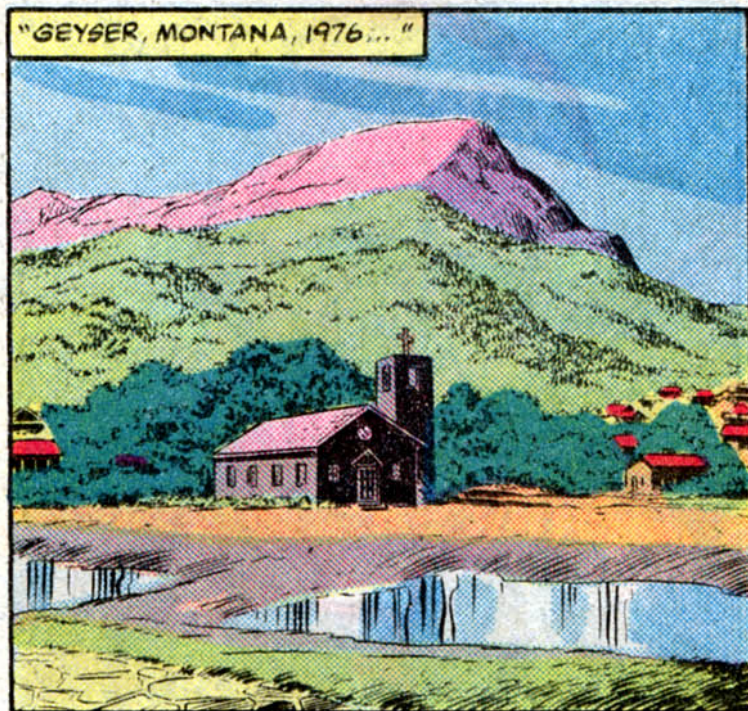
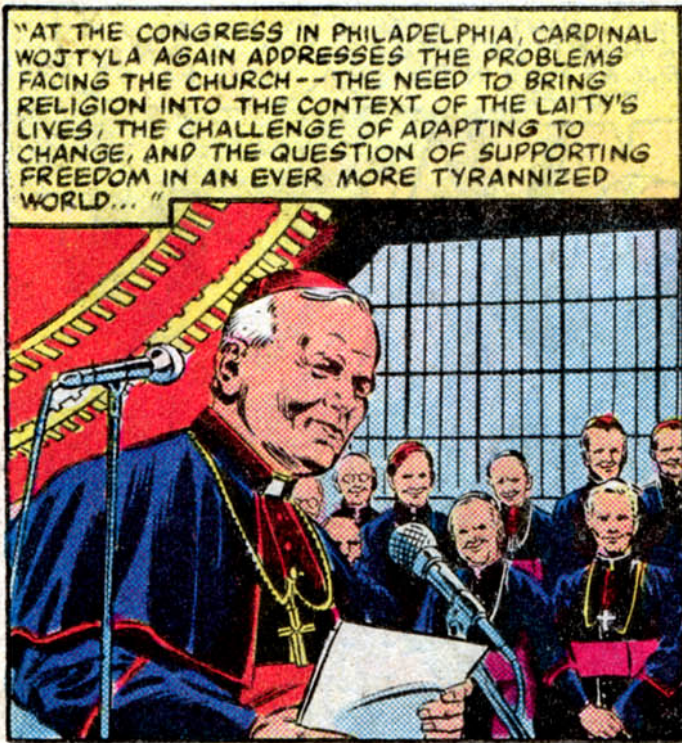
BLESS YOU, IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, FATHER!

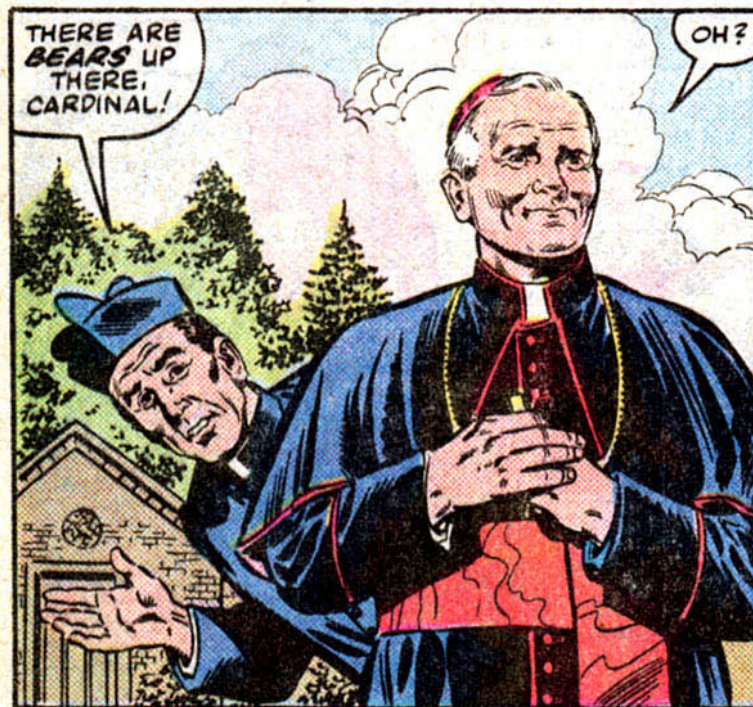
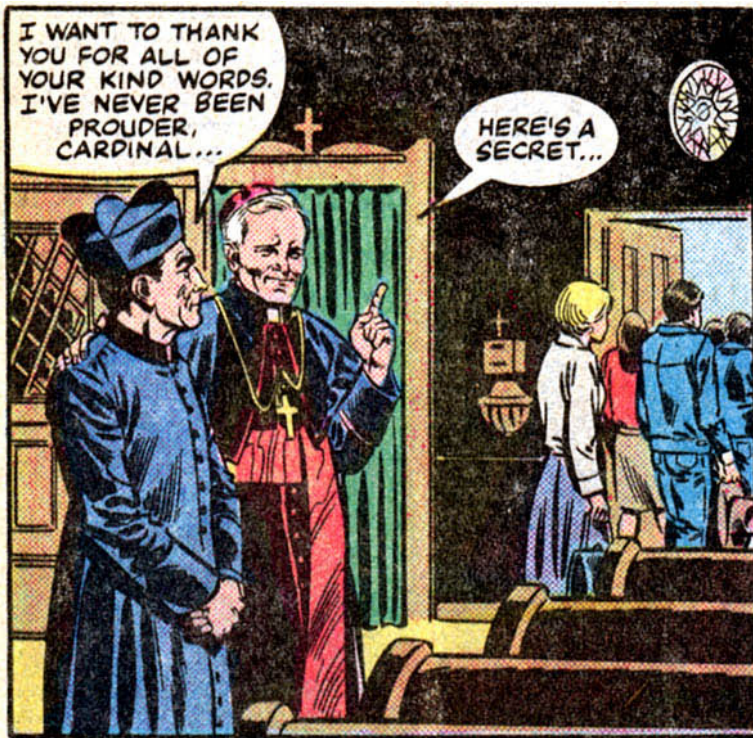
IT'S A SHORT WALK TO THE CAR, YOUR EMINENCE! I NEVER MIND WALKING, TELL ME FATHER, WHY IS EVERYONE STARING AT US?



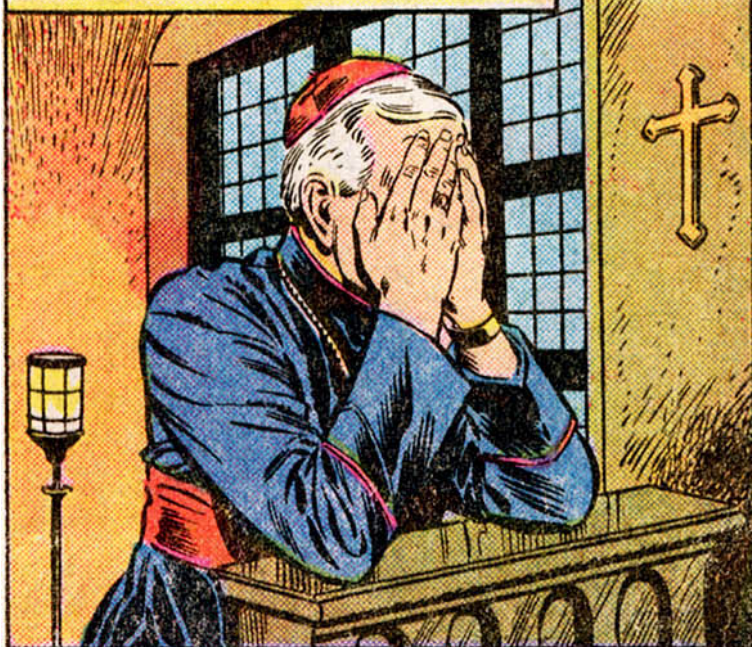
I BELIEVE IT'S THE CASSOCK. THEY AREN'T COMMONLY WORN IN THIS COUNTRY. IN POLAND, THEY ARE WORN EVERYWHERE-- FOR THEY ARE OUR SYMBOL, A MEANS OF REMINDING THE PEOPLE AND THE COMMUNISTS THAT THE CLERGY ARE STILL THERE!







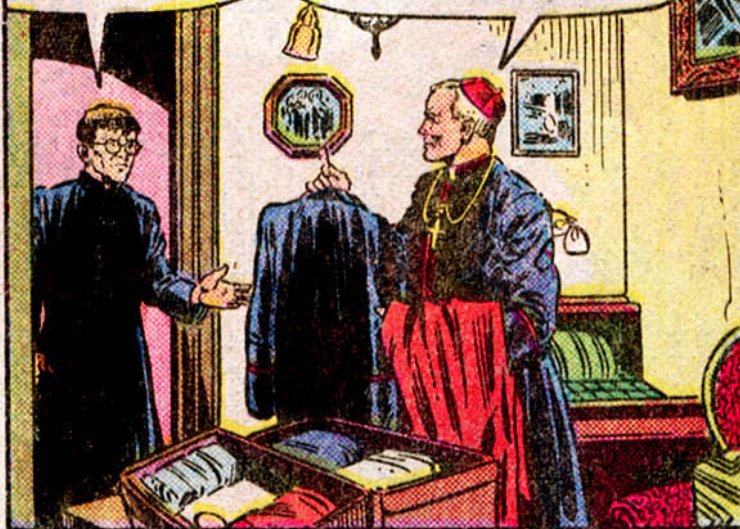
"IN 1978, TRAGEDY ONCE AGAIN STRIKES THE CHURCH, WITH THE DEATH OF POPE PAUL VI. THE EVENT STRIKES CARDINAL WOJTYLA HARD..."



"THE DEATH NECESSITATES ANOTHER TRIP TO ROME FOR CARDINAL WOJTYLA, ANOTHER ABSENCE FROM THE LAND AND FRIENDS HE LOVES..."

I CAME RIGHT OVER WHEN I HEARD THE NEWS, I'M SO SORRY, KAROL!

THANK YOU, MIETEK. OUR TRIAL IS ONLY BEGINNING. THE CARDINALS MUST NOW CHOOSE ANOTHER POPE...



IT COULD BE YOU, YOU KNOW!

ME?

NO, THE POPE SHOULD BE ITALIAN, SINCE HE IS PRIMARILY BISHOP OF ROME.



PETER WAS THE *FIRST* BISHOP OF ROME, AND HE WASN'T ROMAN. OR EVEN CATHOLIC, FOR THAT MATTER. HE WAS A JEW!



YOU'RE WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR-- A MODERATE FROM A COUNTRY NOT TOO POWERFUL OR TOO SMALL... SOMEONE INTERESTED IN SPIRITUAL MATTERS!

THAT'S ENOUGH! PLEASE FORGET YOUR FOOLISH FANTASIES!



"ON AUGUST 26, 1978, POPE JOHN PAUL I TAKES COMMAND OF THE SEE OF ST. PETER..."

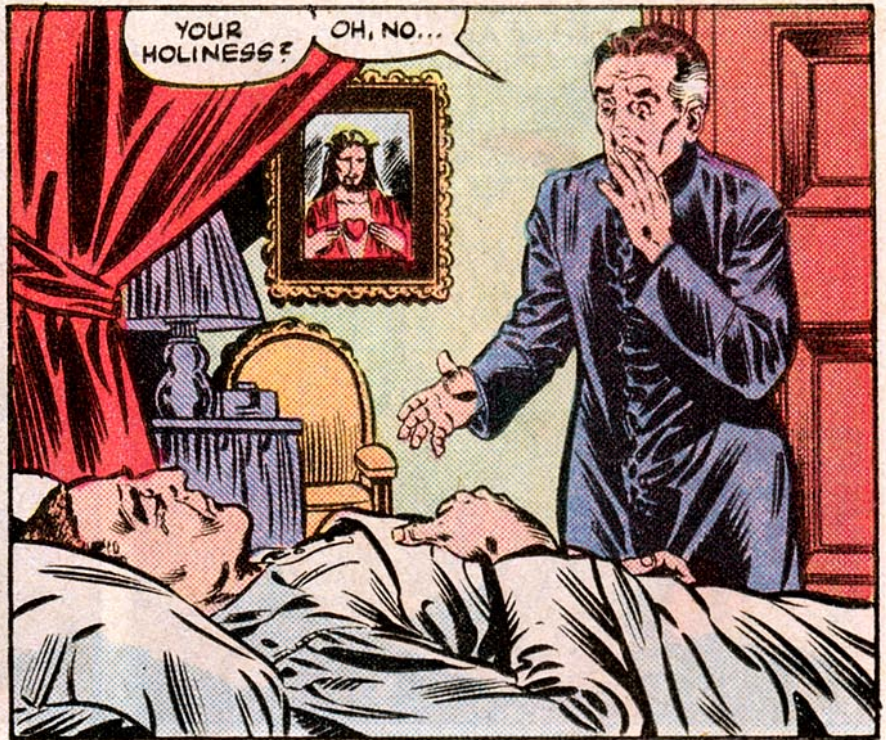
"AND, CARDINAL WOJTYLA SECRETLY BREATHES A SIGH OF RELIEF, FOR HE IS FREE TO GO HOME WHEN THIS IS OVER..."



"THIRTY-FOUR DAYS PASS SINCE POPE JOHN PAUL'S INSTALLATION-- AND, ON THIS MORNING, A RUDE AND TERRIBLE SURPRISE AWAITS HIS SECRETARY, FATHER MCGEE..."

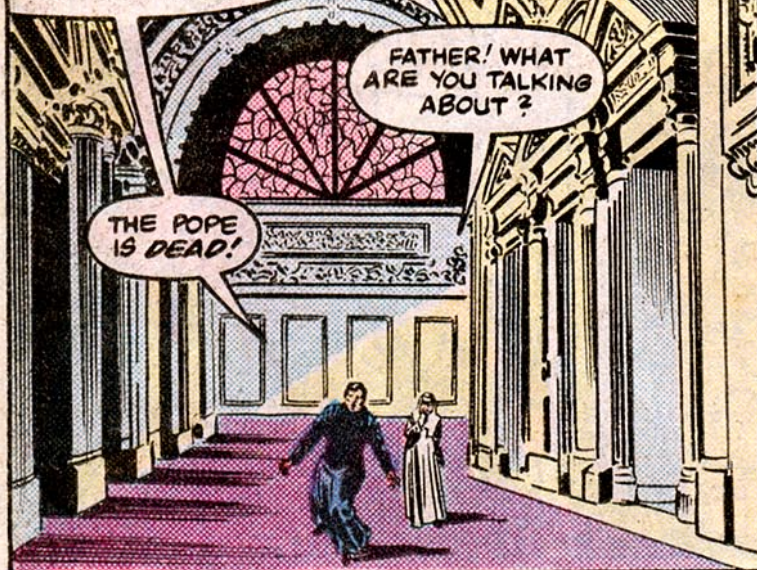


YOUR HOLINESS?!
ARE YOU UP?
YOU'RE RUNNING
LATE!



YOUR HOLINESS?
OH, NO...

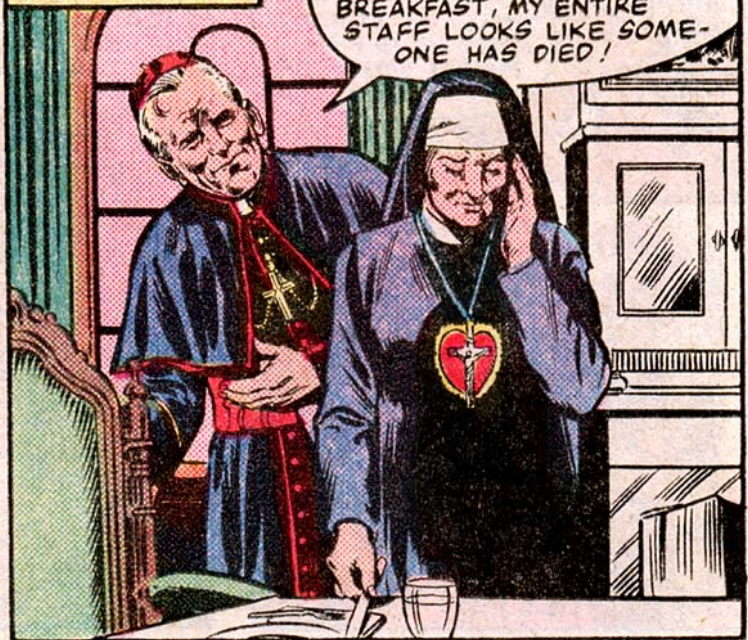
WHERE'S CARDINAL
VILLOT? AS VATICAN
SECRETARY OF STATE,
HE'LL KNOW WHAT TO
DO! FIND HIM!



FATHER! WHAT
ARE YOU TALKING
ABOUT?

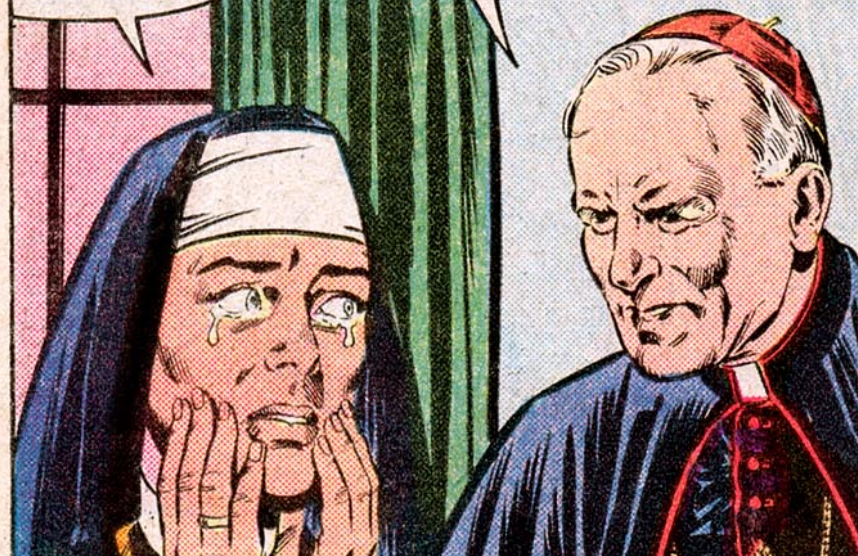
THE POPE
IS DEAD!

"AN HOUR LATER,
IN CRACOW..."



WHAT'S THIS? I GO TO SAY
MASS, AND WHEN I COME TO
BREAKFAST, MY ENTIRE
STAFF LOOKS LIKE SOME-
ONE HAS DIED!

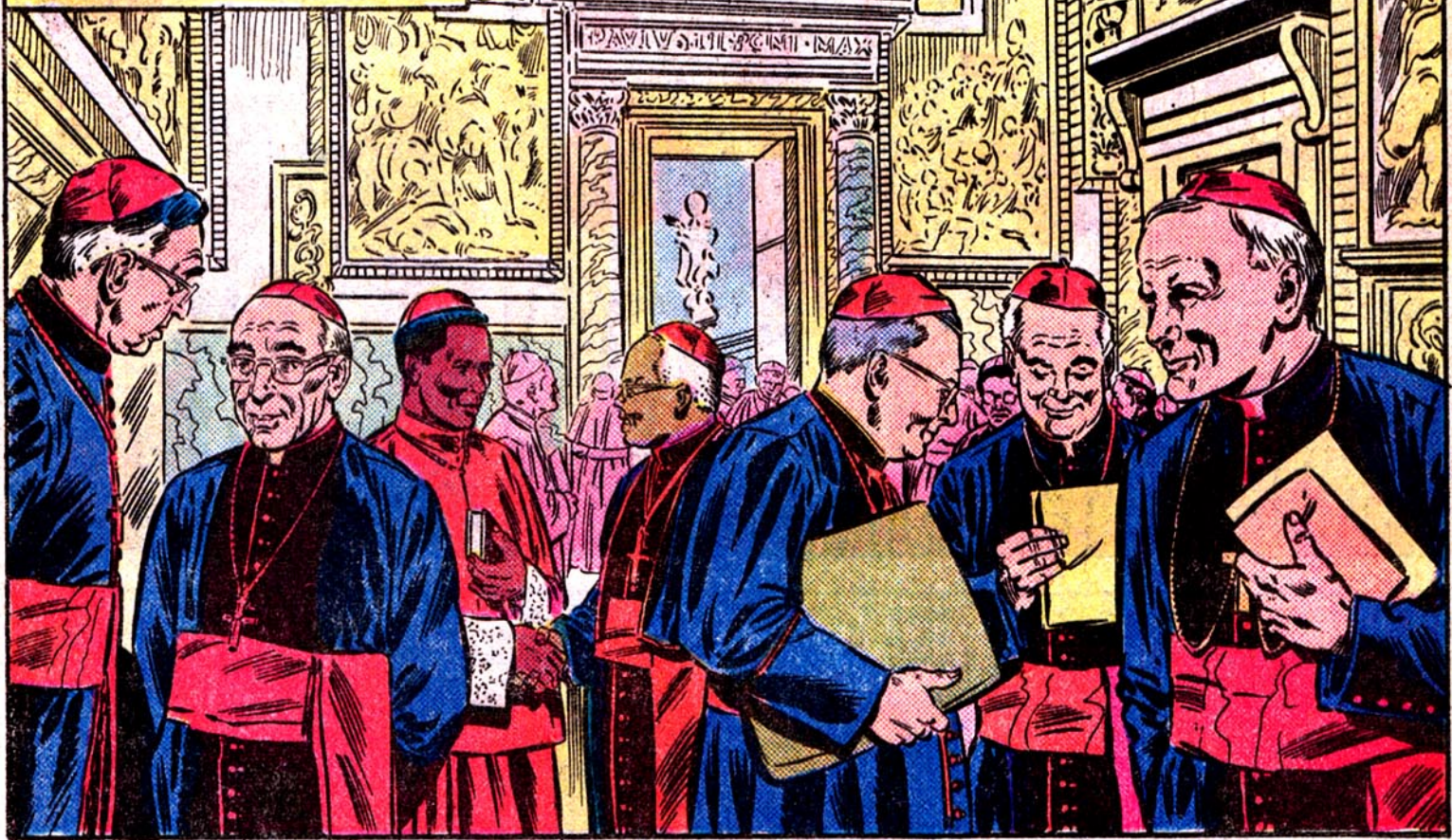
THE POPE HAS
DIED, YOUR
EMINENCE!
WHAT?! IT ISN'T POSSIBLE!
HE JUST TOOK OVER... HE JUST...



"IN HIS HEART, CARDINAL
WOJTYLA FEARS LOSING
MORE THAN HIS POPE. IN
THE LAST PAPAL ELECTIONS,
HE RECEIVED SEVERAL
VOTES, AND NOW THE
PAPACY LOOMS HEAVILY
BEFORE HIM..."



"IT'S SAID THAT ALL CATHOLICISM
REVOLVES AROUND THE VATICAN!
CARDINALS AND PRIESTS AND
PEOPLE FROM ALL OVER THE
WORLD ARRIVE HERE TO WATCH
THE ELECTION OF A NEW POPE..."

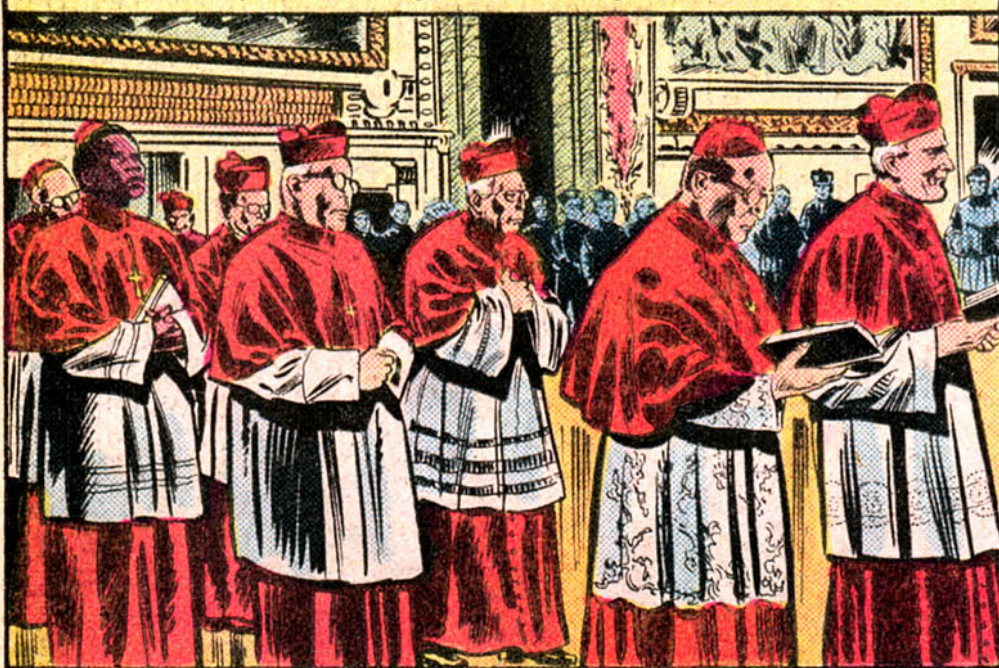


A MOURNING ON TOP OF ANOTHER MOURNING! IT IS A VERY
GRAVE TRIAL FOR THE CHURCH, AND WE MUST PRAY!

WHO KNOWS
WHAT AWAITS
US NOW?



"OCTOBER 14, 1978. FROM ALL OVER THE VATICAN, THE CARDINALS GATHER, KNOWING THAT ONE OF THEM WILL BECOME THE NEXT POPE..."



HEY! YOU DON'T REALLY THINK I'LL BE ELECTED, DO YOU?

ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE...AND I NEED PICTURES OF ALL THE CARDINALS!



"THE CARDINALS LOCK THEMSELVES IN CONCLAVE AND ALL EYES WATCH THE CHIMNEY THAT WILL SIGNAL THE ELECTION OF THE POPE..."



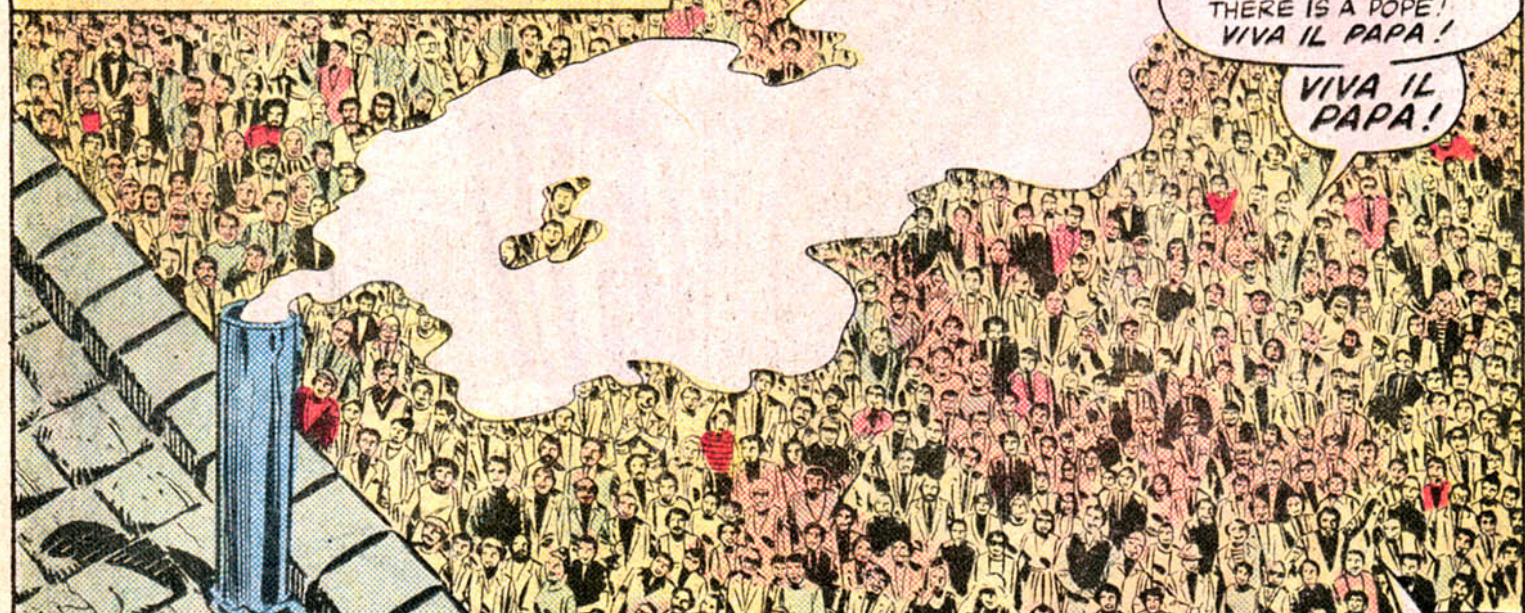
WHITE SMOKE! WE HAVE A NEW POPE! A NEW POPE!
WAIT! SOMETHING ISN'T RIGHT HERE, I'D SWEAR IT!



"LATER..."



"FOR LONG HOURS, THE WAITING CONTINUES..."

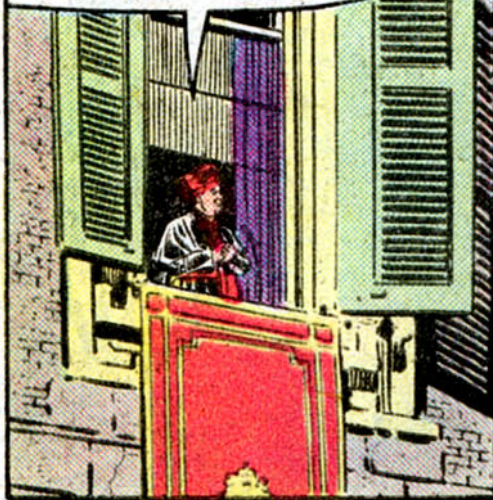


AT LAST! WHITE SMOKE! THERE IS A POPE! VIVA IL PAPA!

VIVA IL PAPA!

"THE CROWD QUIETS ANXIOUSLY AS CARDINAL PERICLE FELICI SUDDENLY APPEARS..."

I ANNOUNCE TO YOU A GREAT JOY! WE HAVE A POPE! I PRESENT KAROL CARDINAL WOJTYLA OF CRACOW-- HIS HOLINESS, POPE JOHN PAUL II.



A POLE? POPE?



WHY NOT? THERE HAVE BEEN NON-ITALIAN POPES BEFORE!



IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE HE'S FROM! HE IS A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD NOW!

VIVA IL PAPA!

"AS IF TO QUIET THE EXCITED CROWD, A CALM VOICE RINGS OUT IN ITALIAN-- THE VOICE OF THE NEW POPE..."

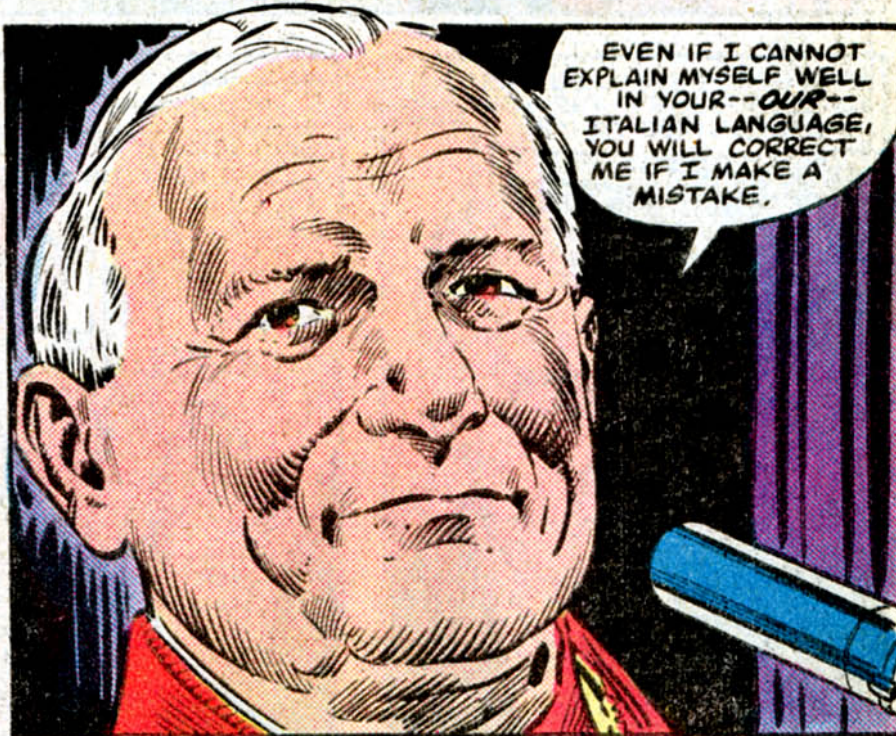
I WAS AFRAID TO RECEIVE THIS NOMINATION!



BUT I TOOK IT IN THE SPIRIT OF OBEDIENCE TO OUR LORD, AND IN TOTAL CONFIDENCE IN HIS MOTHER, THE MOST HOLY MADONNA.

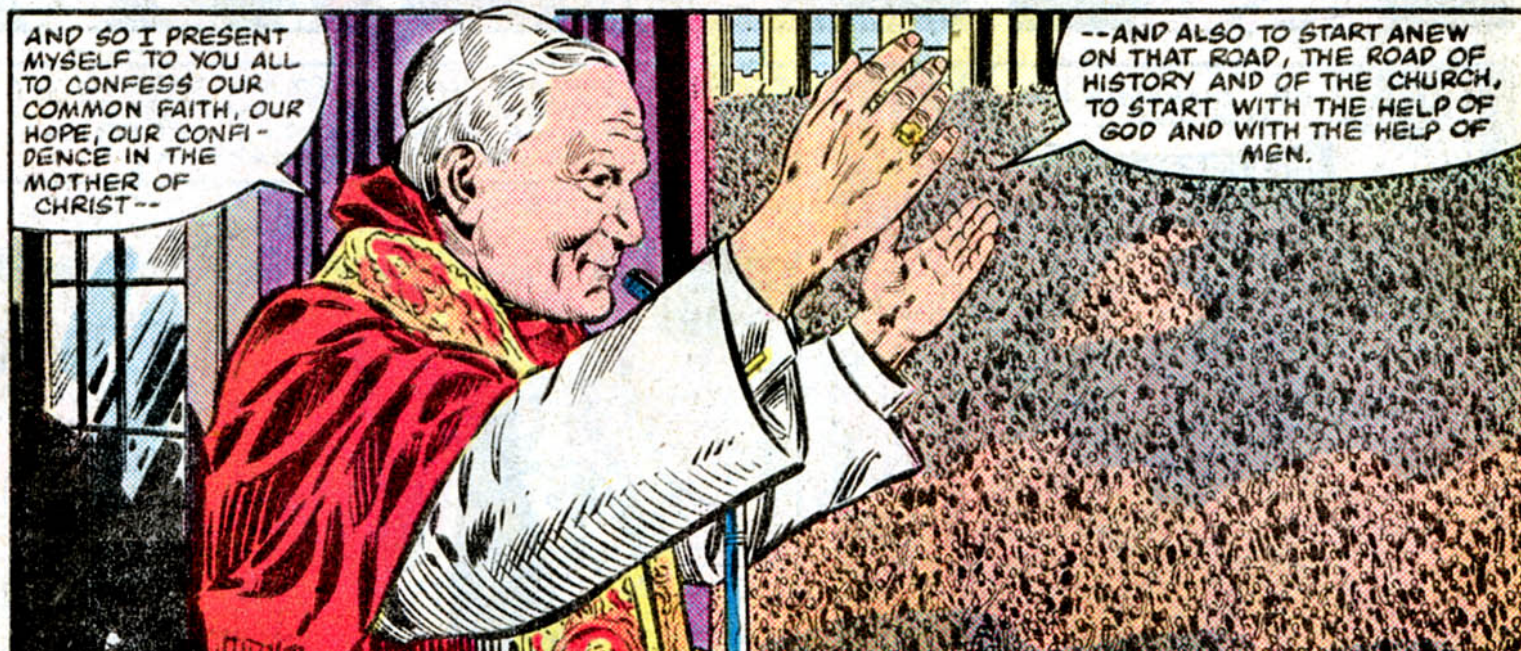


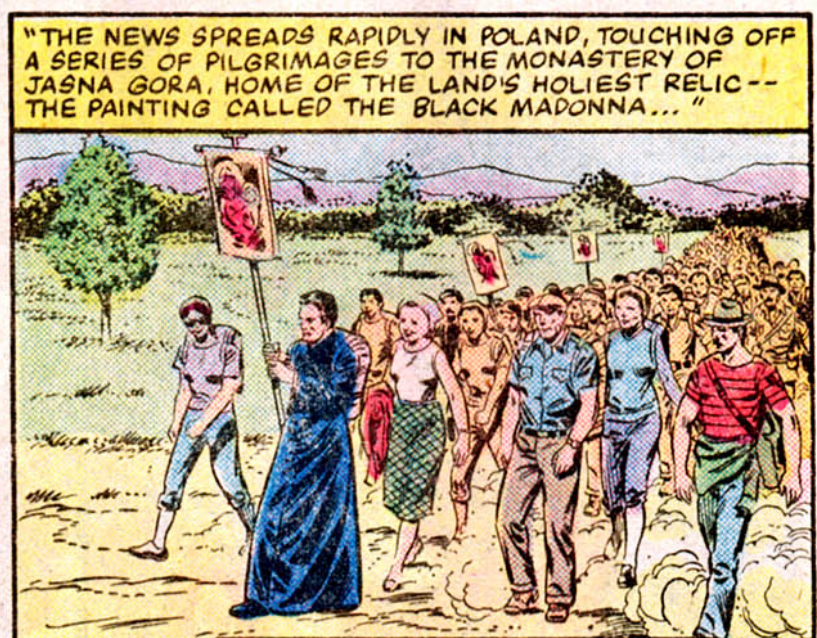
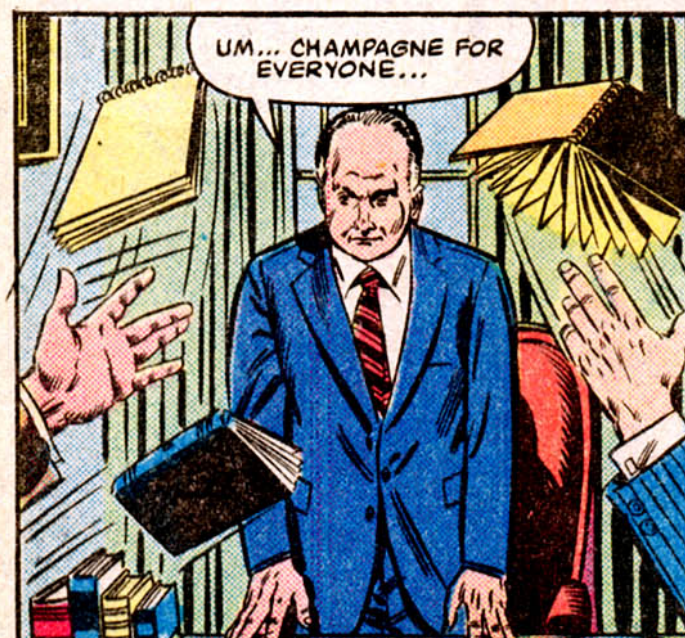
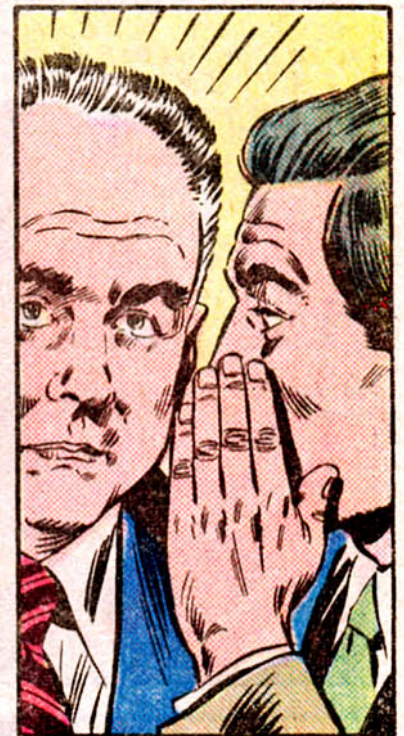
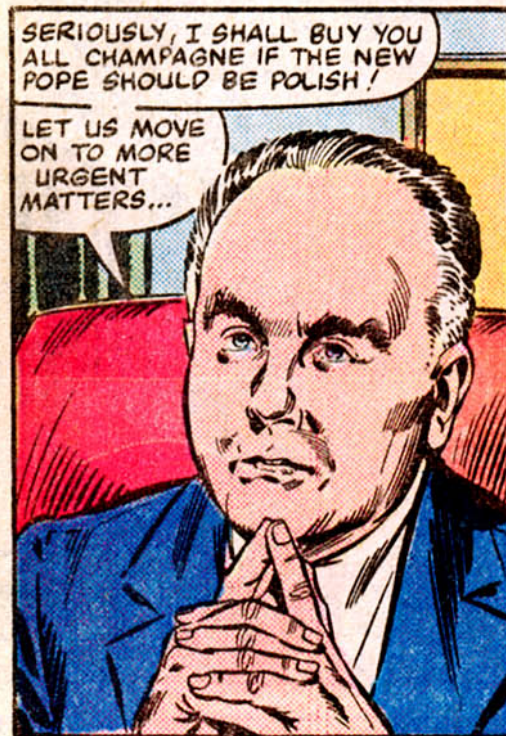
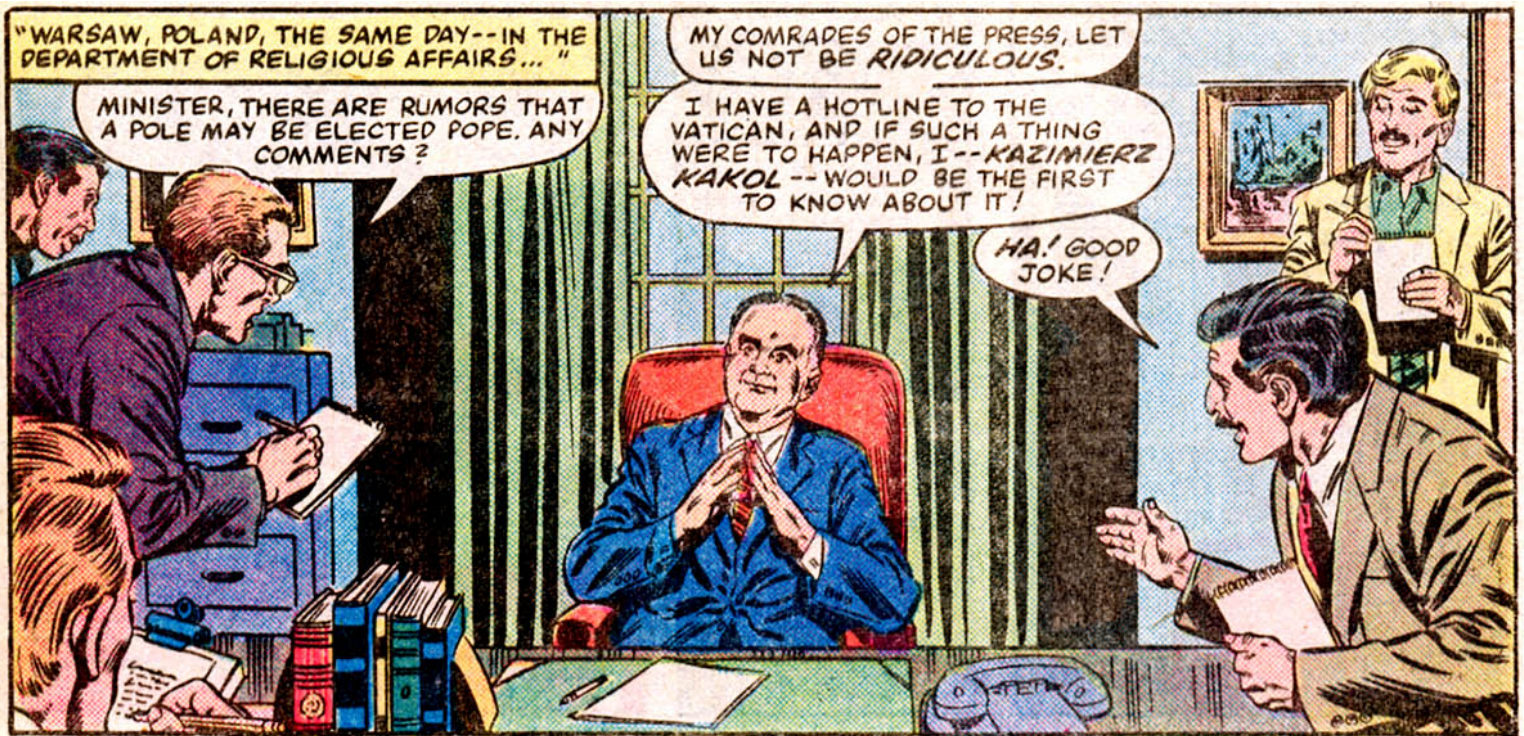
EVEN IF I CANNOT EXPLAIN MYSELF WELL IN YOUR--OUR-- ITALIAN LANGUAGE, YOU WILL CORRECT ME IF I MAKE A MISTAKE.



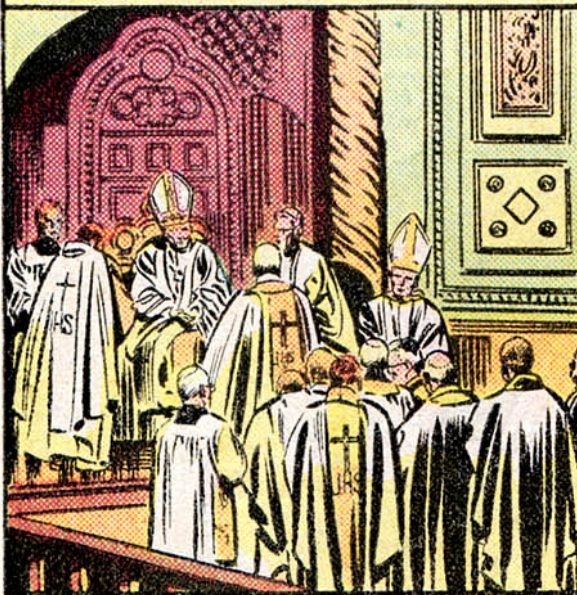
AND SO I PRESENT MYSELF TO YOU ALL TO CONFESS OUR COMMON FAITH, OUR HOPE, OUR CONFIDENCE IN THE MOTHER OF CHRIST--

--AND ALSO TO START ANEW ON THAT ROAD, THE ROAD OF HISTORY AND OF THE CHURCH, TO START WITH THE HELP OF GOD AND WITH THE HELP OF MEN.





"YET, POPE JOHN PAUL II SAYS NOTHING OF HIS OWN THOUGHTS ON THIS HIGH HONOR. HE HAS NEW DUTIES TO ADJUST TO, BEGINNING WITH A CONCLAVE OF CARDINALS, TWO DAYS AFTER HIS ELECTION..."

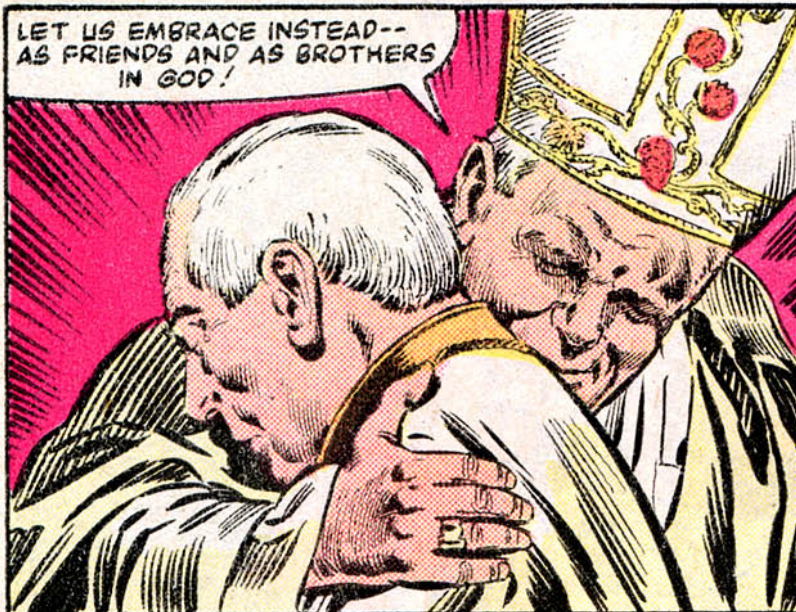


"THE CARDINALS HAVE ASSEMBLED TO SWEAR FEALTY TO THEIR NEW LEADER-- BUT THE POMP ACCRUED TO HIS OFFICE OVER THE YEARS IS NOT FOR POPE JOHN PAUL II..."



CARDINAL WYSZYNSKI! AS PRIMATE OF POLAND, YOU WERE MY LEADER FOR SO LONG! IT IS NOT RIGHT THAT THE LEADER SHOULD KNEEL BEFORE THE FOLLOWER!

LET US EMBRACE INSTEAD-- AS FRIENDS AND AS BROTHERS IN GOD!



"THERE ARE SOME WHO DISMISS THIS DEPARTURE FROM PROCEDURE AS A SENTIMENTAL ABERRATION ON THE POPE'S PART..."

"IT IS, IN FACT, THE BEGINNING OF A CANDOR THAT WILL COME TO CHARACTERIZE THE NEW PONTIFF-- CONTINUING WITH A NEWS CONFERENCE SEVERAL DAYS LATER..."

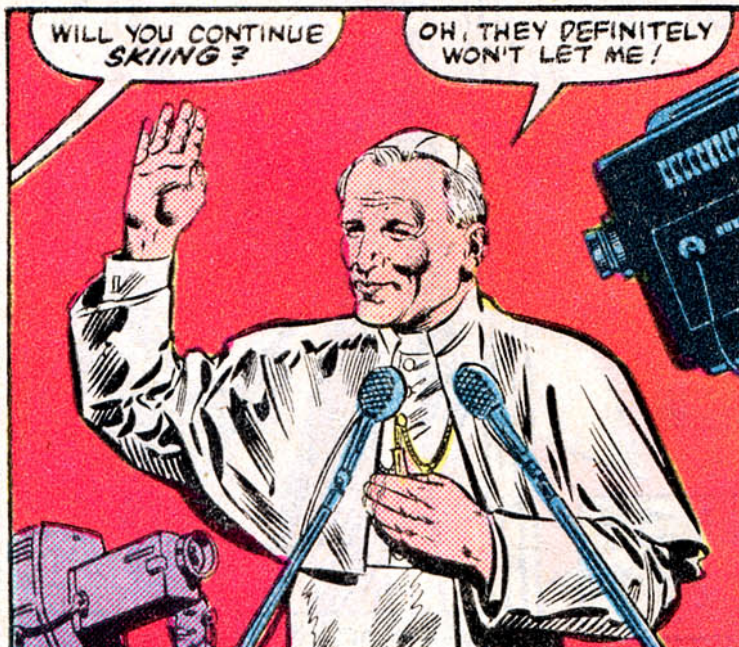


ARE YOU GOING TO VISIT POLAND?

IF THEY'LL LET ME!

WILL YOU CONTINUE SKIING?

OH, THEY DEFINITELY WON'T LET ME!



OH, IF ONLY WE HAD ANOTHER POPE LIKE PIUS XII. HE WAS SO GOOD. HE NEVER EVEN SMILED!

I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! THIS PEOPLE'S POPE WILL BE THE RUIN OF US!



"SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22, 1978... ON THIS DAY, KAROL WOJTYLA OF POLAND IS OFFICIALLY INAUGURATED AS THE 264TH POPE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH."

IN THE NAME OF CHRIST I OFFER A CORDIAL GREETING ... I COUNT ON THE SUPPORT OF YOUR PRAYERS AND YOUR GOODWILL IN CARRYING OUT MY MISSION OF SERVICE TO THE CHURCH AND MANKIND. MAY CHRIST GIVE YOU HIS GRACE AND HIS PEACE, OVERTURNING THE BARRIERS OF DIVISION AND MAKING ALL THINGS ONE IN HIM!

PRAY FOR ME! HELP ME TO SERVE YOU! AMEN.



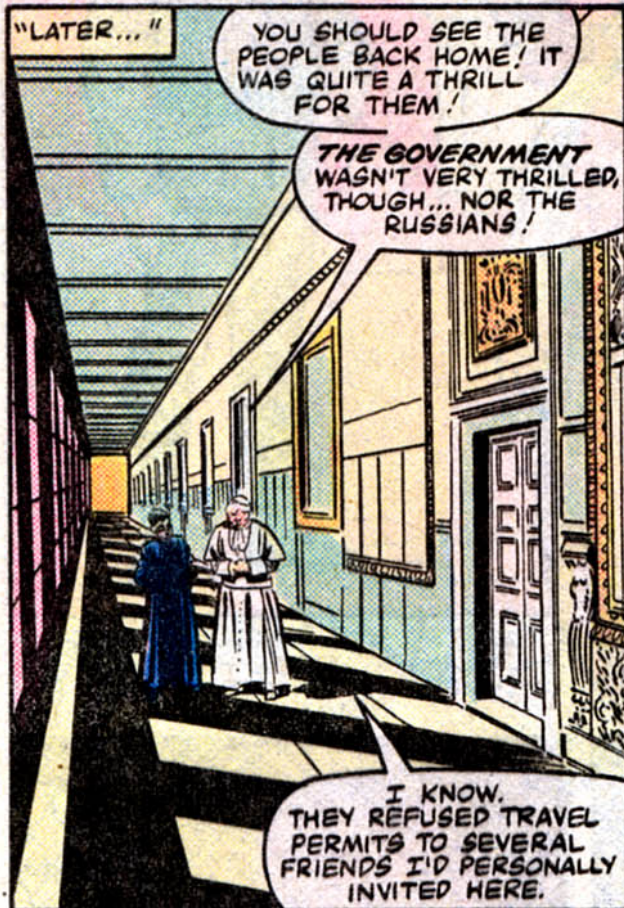
"THE EVENT IS ATTENDED BY A NUMBER OF DIGNITARIES--THE KING AND QUEEN OF SPAIN, THE HEAD OF THE PEOPLE'S STATE COUNCIL OF POLAND, THE PRIME MINISTER OF FRANCE, THE U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI... AND, MOST INTERESTINGLY, THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, LEADER OF THE PROTESTANT ANGLICAN CHURCH..."

"ALL IN ALL, 300,000 PEOPLE ARE IN ATTENDANCE IN THE"

"HUNDREDS OF POPE JOHN PAUL II'S COUNTRYMEN COME TO THE INAUGURATION-- AND, ON THE NEXT DAY, THE POPE MEETS THEM ALL, FOR THEY ARE STILL DEAREST TO HIS HEART..."



"LATER..."

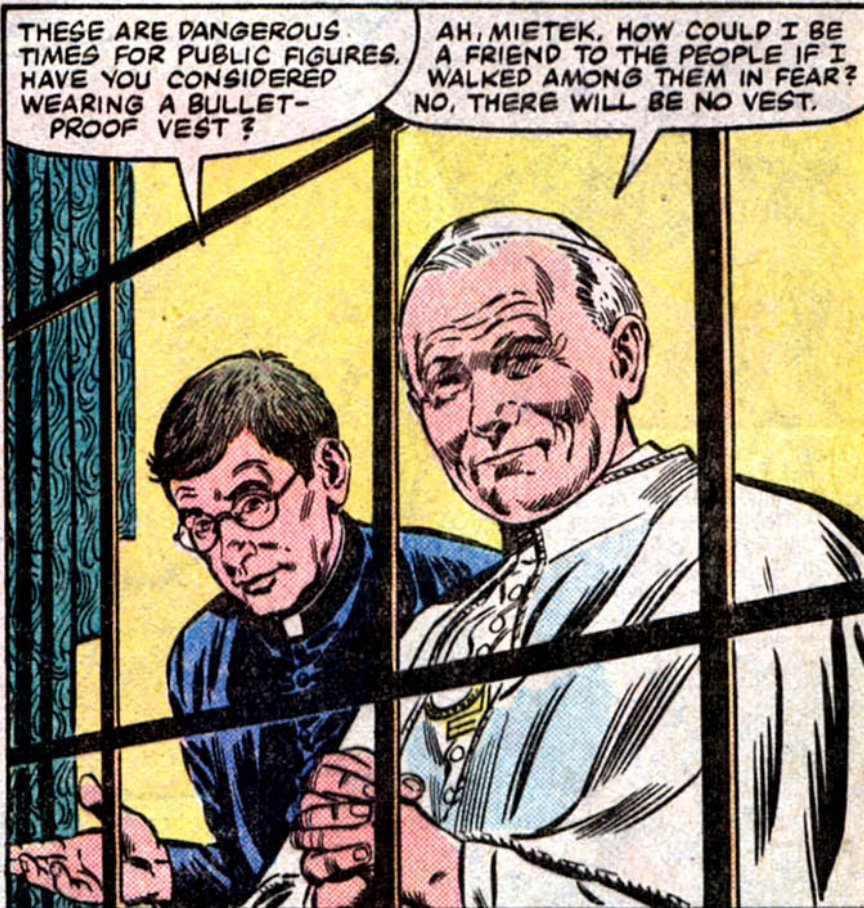


YOU SHOULD SEE THE PEOPLE BACK HOME! IT WAS QUITE A THRILL FOR THEM!

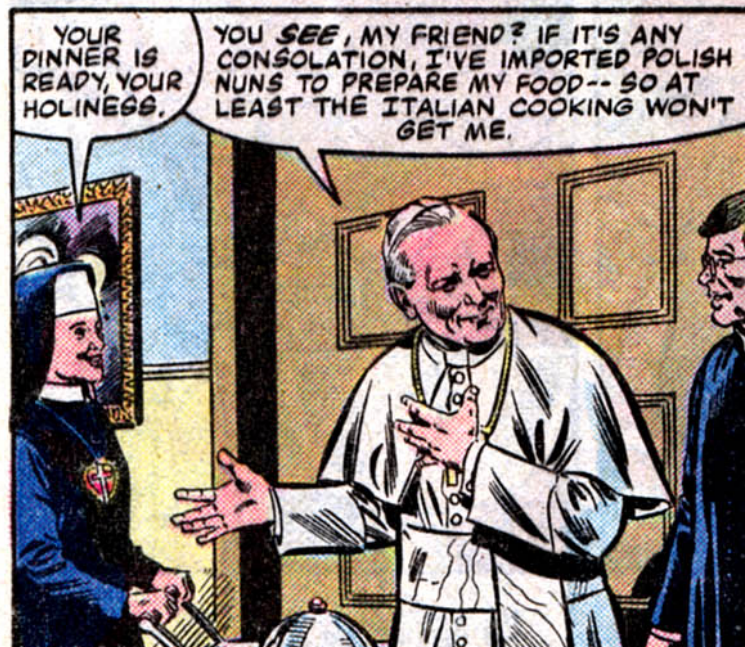
THE GOVERNMENT WASN'T VERY THRILLED, THOUGH... NOR THE RUSSIANS!

I KNOW. THEY REFUSED TRAVEL PERMITS TO SEVERAL FRIENDS I'D PERSONALLY INVITED HERE.

THESE ARE DANGEROUS TIMES FOR PUBLIC FIGURES. HAVE YOU CONSIDERED WEARING A BULLET-PROOF VEST?

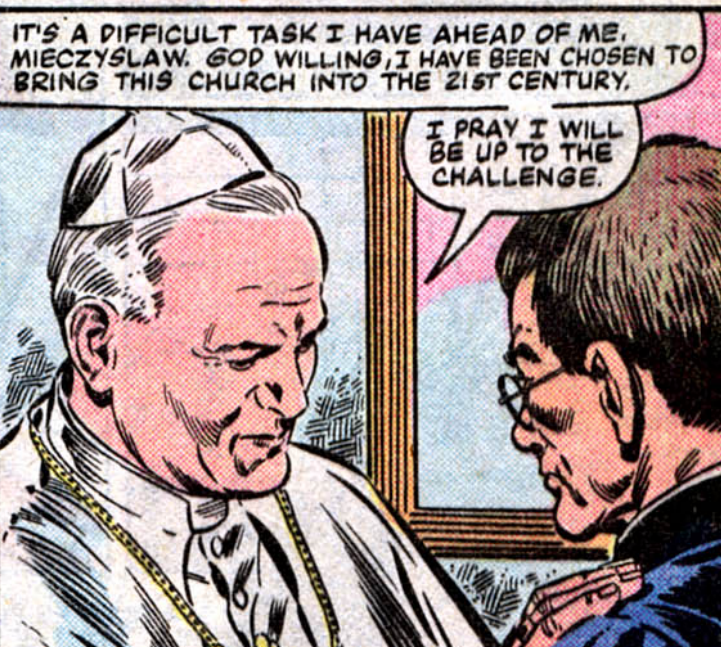


AH, MIETEK. HOW COULD I BE A FRIEND TO THE PEOPLE IF I WALKED AMONG THEM IN FEAR? NO, THERE WILL BE NO VEST.



YOUR DINNER IS READY, YOUR HOLINESS.

YOU SEE, MY FRIEND? IF IT'S ANY CONSOLATION, I'VE IMPORTED POLISH NUNS TO PREPARE MY FOOD-- SO AT LEAST THE ITALIAN COOKING WON'T GET ME.



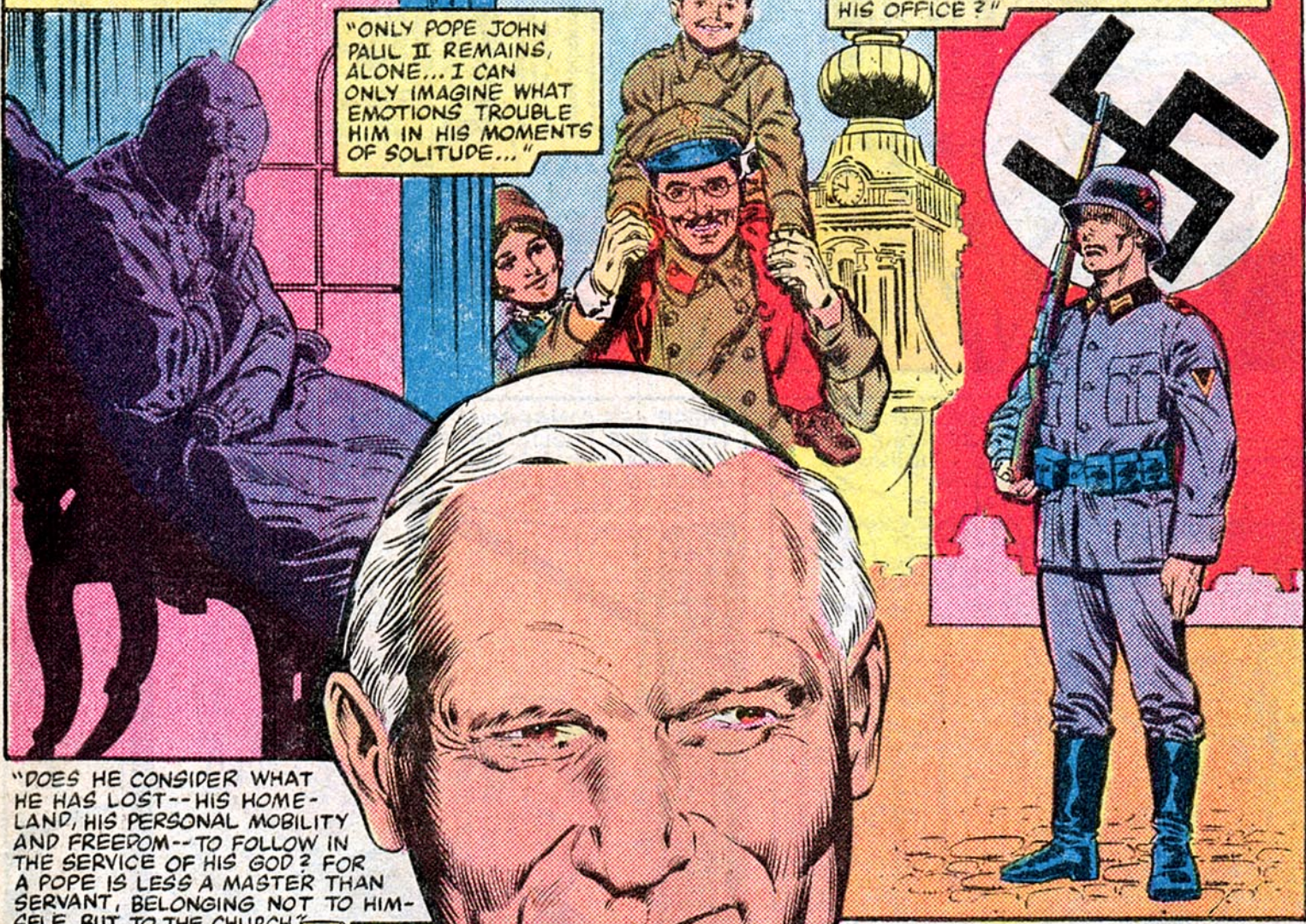
IT'S A DIFFICULT TASK I HAVE AHEAD OF ME, MIECZYSLAW. GOD WILLING, I HAVE BEEN CHOSEN TO BRING THIS CHURCH INTO THE 21ST CENTURY.

I PRAY I WILL BE UP TO THE CHALLENGE.

"FINALLY, AFTER SEEMING YEARS, THE FRIENDS ARE GONE, THE REPORTERS ARE GONE, THE SPECTATORS AND THE DEVOUT ARE GONE..."

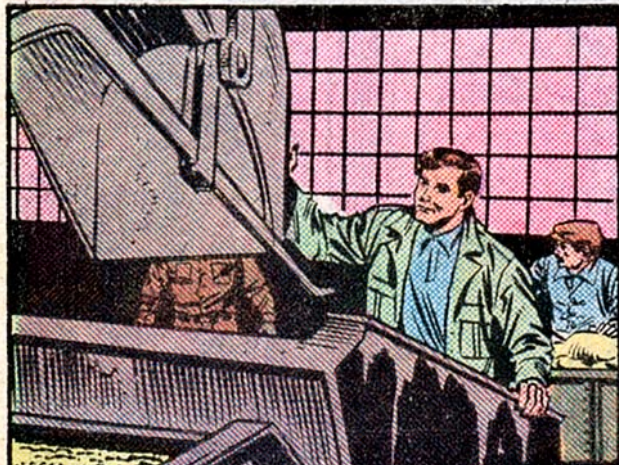
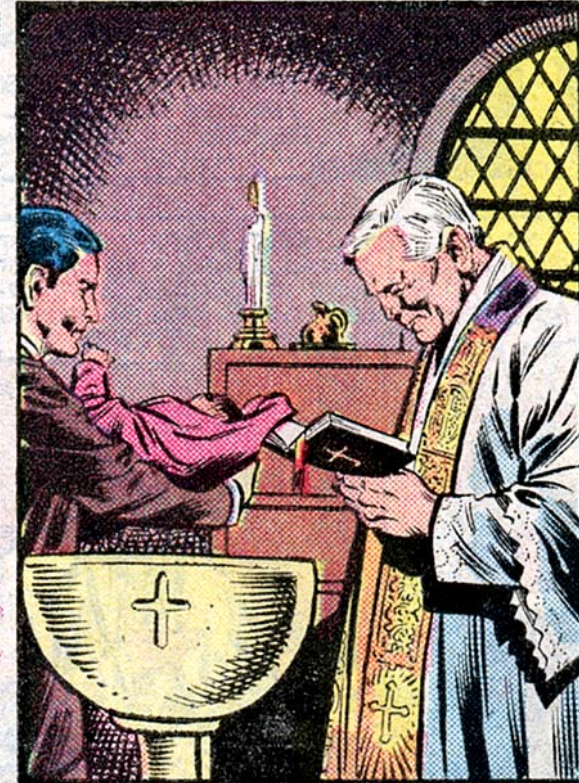
"ONLY POPE JOHN PAUL II REMAINS, ALONE... I CAN ONLY IMAGINE WHAT EMOTIONS TROUBLE HIM IN HIS MOMENTS OF SOLITUDE..."

"DOES HE THINK ABOUT HIS PARENTS, HIS LIFE, THE STRANGE AND CIRCUITOUS PATH THAT BROUGHT HIM TO HIS OFFICE?"



"DOES HE CONSIDER WHAT HE HAS LOST--HIS HOMELAND, HIS PERSONAL MOBILITY AND FREEDOM--TO FOLLOW IN THE SERVICE OF HIS GOD? FOR A POPE IS LESS A MASTER THAN SERVANT, BELONGING NOT TO HIMSELF, BUT TO THE CHURCH?"

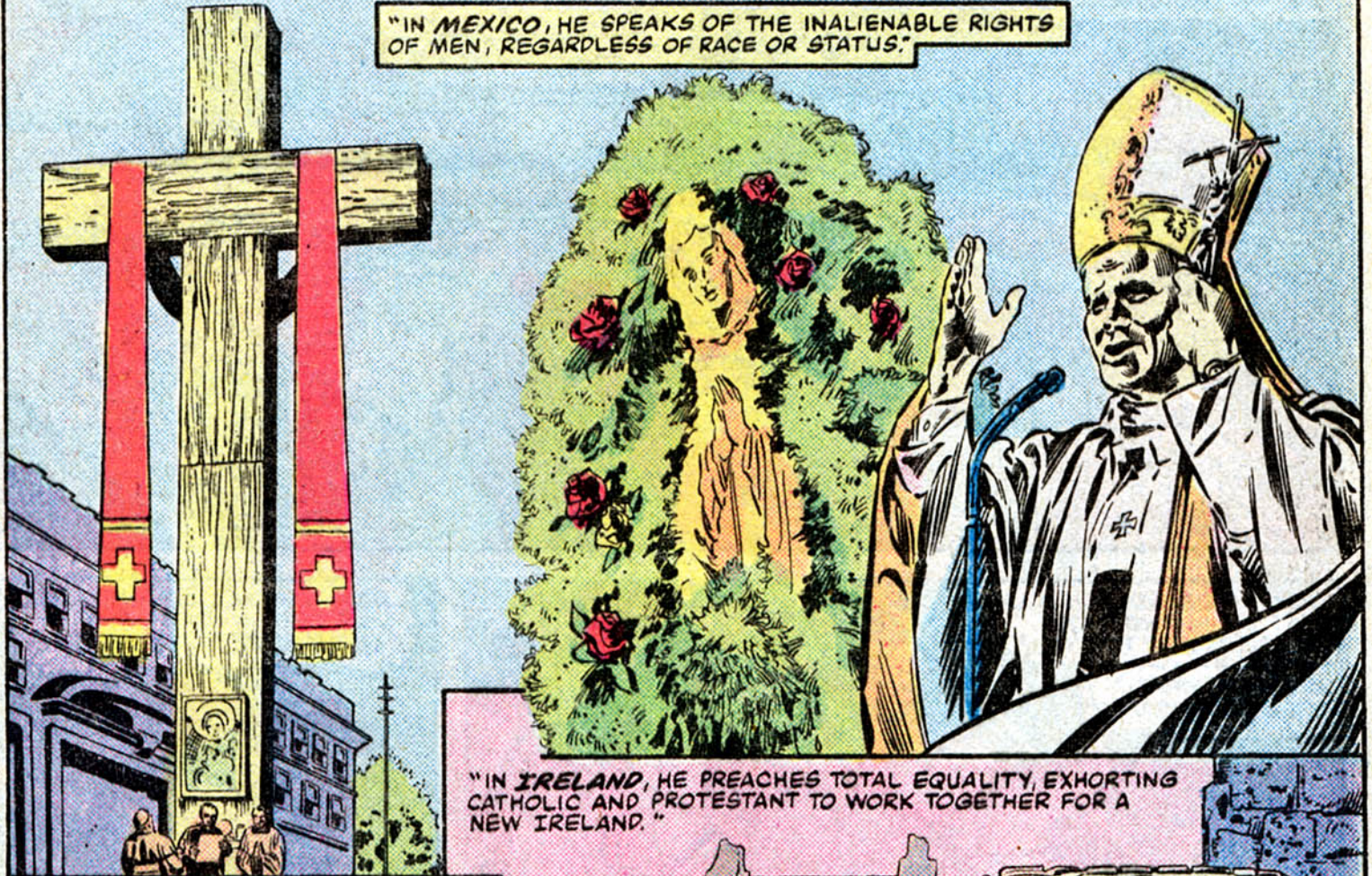
"DOES HE LONG TO BE A SIMPLER--AND PERHAPS HAPPIER--PARISH PRIEST SOMEWHERE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF CRACOW?"



"OR DOES HE SIMPLY ACCEPT? I DON'T KNOW... AND PERHAPS I NEVER WILL. BUT THE POPE WAS A MAN LONG BEFORE HE REACHED THE

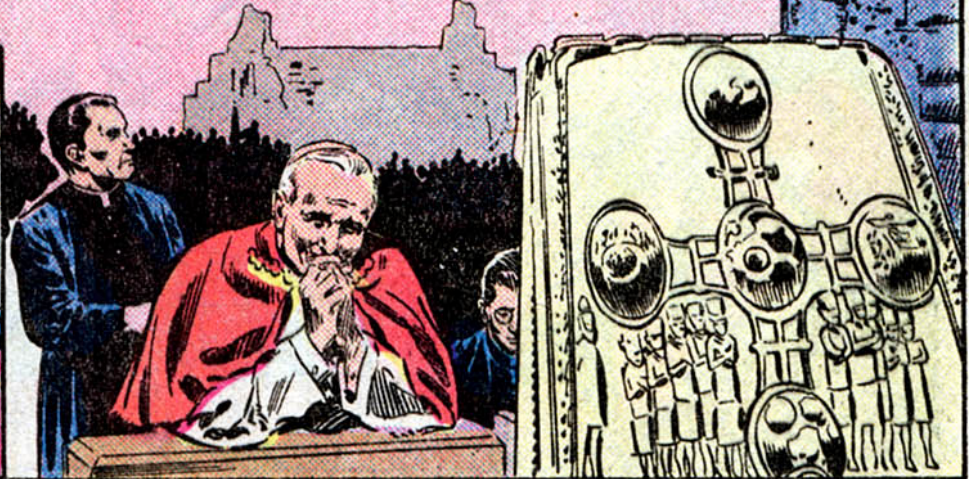
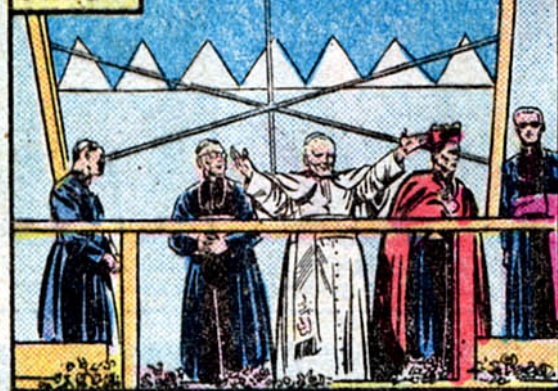
"THE YEAR AFTER HIS INAUGURATION IS A WHIRLWIND OF TRAVELLING, AS POPE JOHN PAUL II CARRIES HIS MESSAGE TO HIS NEW SEE, MOLDING EMPHASIS TO FIT THE SPECIFIC NEEDS OF EACH LAND."

"IN MEXICO, HE SPEAKS OF THE INALIENABLE RIGHTS OF MEN, REGARDLESS OF RACE OR STATUS."



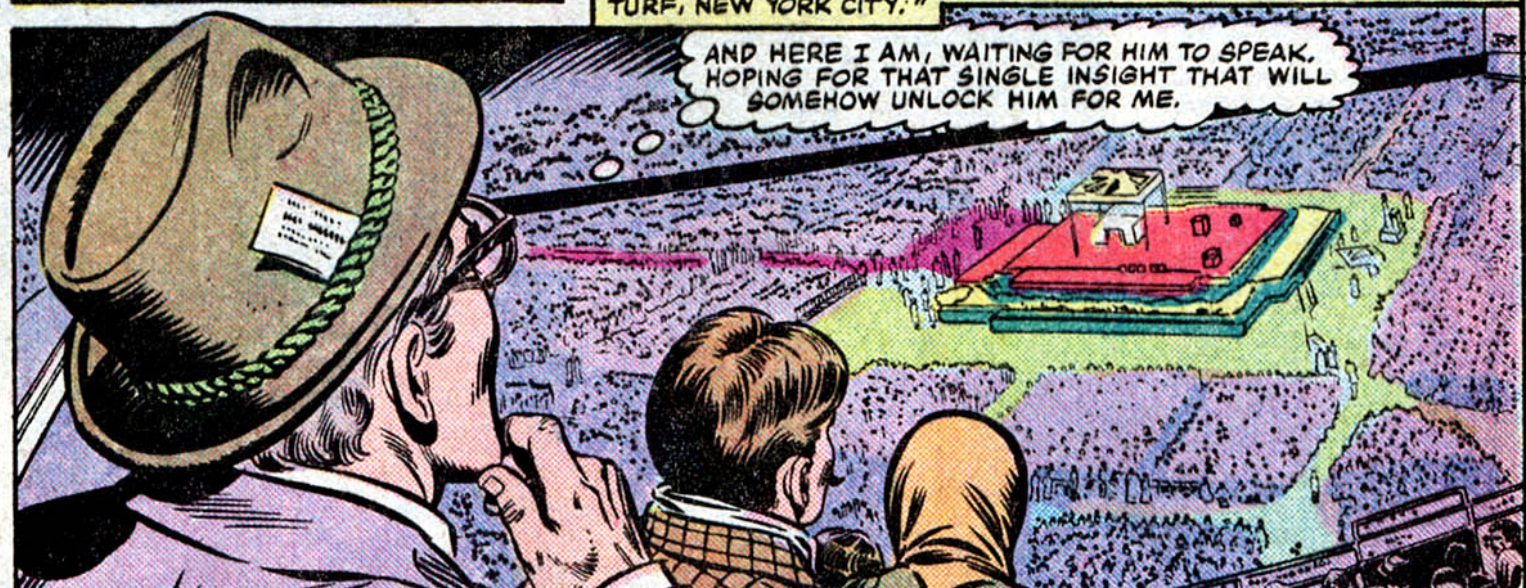
"IN IRELAND, HE PREACHES TOTAL EQUALITY, EXHORTING CATHOLIC AND PROTESTANT TO WORK TOGETHER FOR A NEW IRELAND."

"IN HIS NATIVE POLAND, HE DESCRIBES THE DIGNITY OF THE INDIVIDUAL, SUPERIOR TO THE MACHINERY OF ANY STATE..."



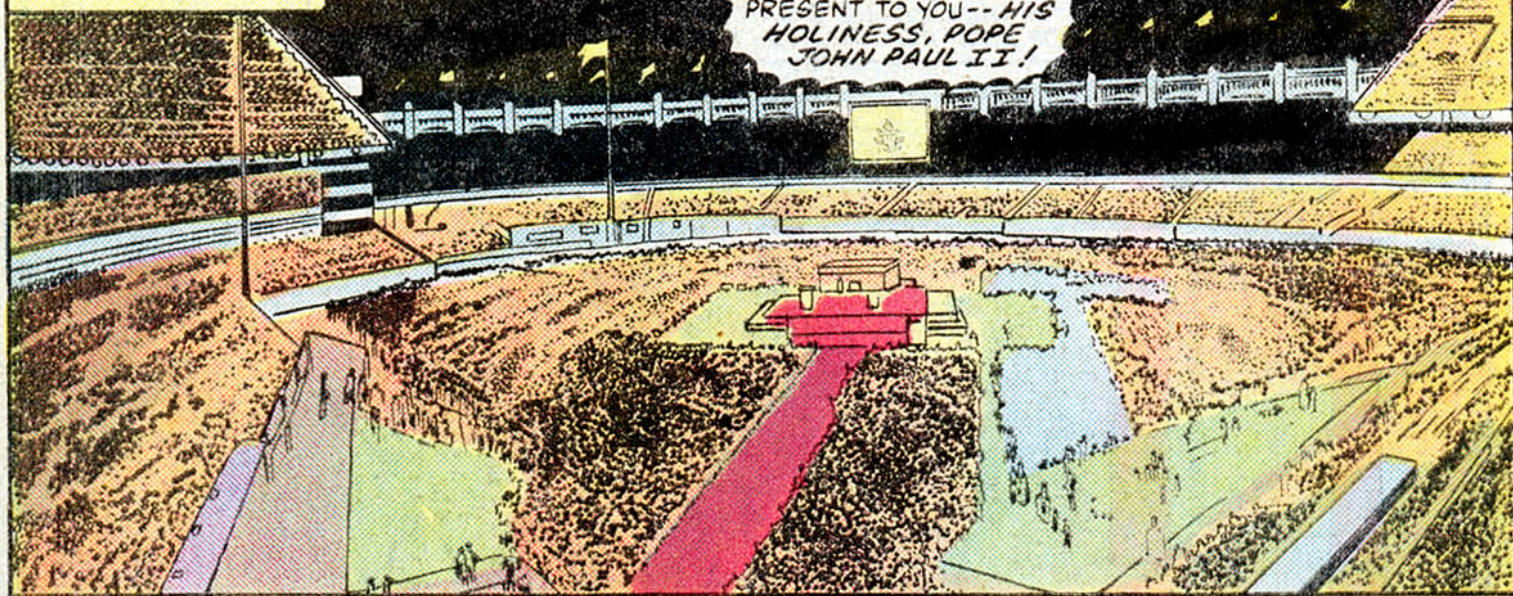
"AND FINALLY, TODAY, OCTOBER 2, 1979, HE IS IN AMERICA. ON MY TURF, NEW YORK CITY."

AND HERE I AM, WAITING FOR HIM TO SPEAK. HOPING FOR THAT SINGLE INSIGHT THAT WILL SOMEHOW UNLOCK HIM FOR ME.



"MAYBE I'M JUST BEING FOOLISH. YOU CAN'T SUM UP A MAN--ANY MAN-- IN ONE OR TWO LINES."

IT'S MY GREAT HONOR TO PRESENT TO YOU-- HIS HOLINESS, POPE JOHN PAUL II!



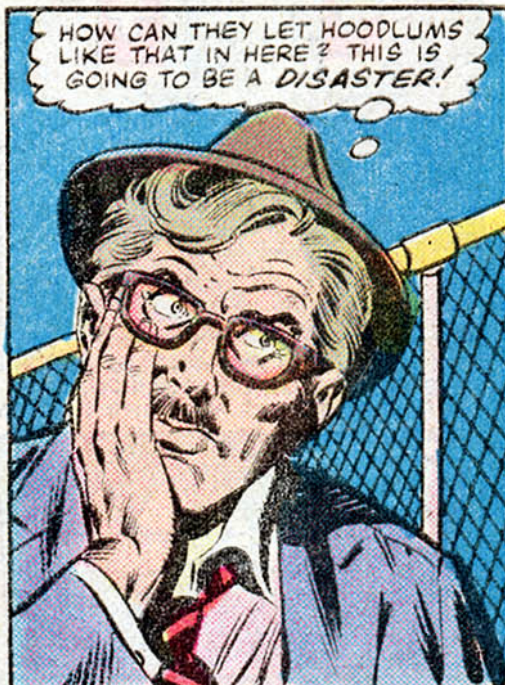
RACK 'EM UP, STACK 'EM UP, BUST 'EM IN TWO! HOLY FATHER, WE'RE FOR YOU!

HEY, MAN! WHAT YOU LOOKIN' AT?



PUNKS!

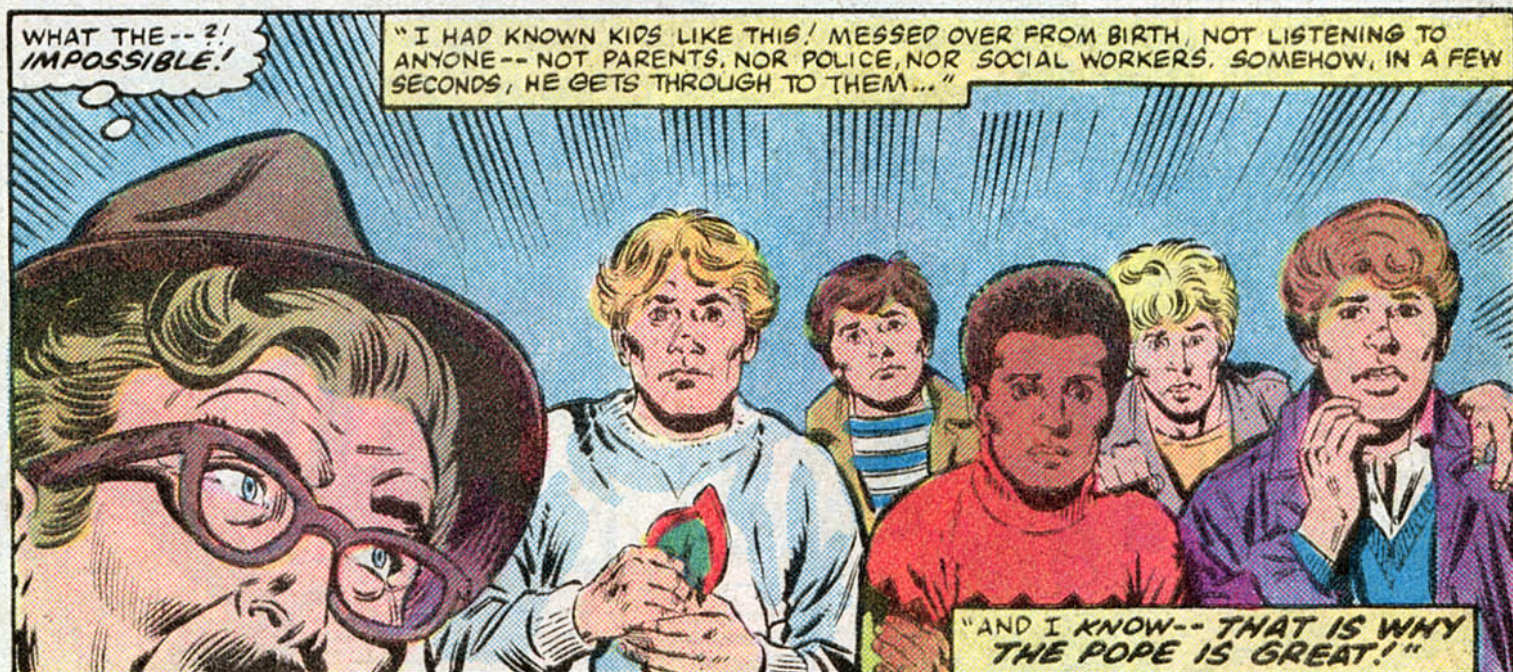
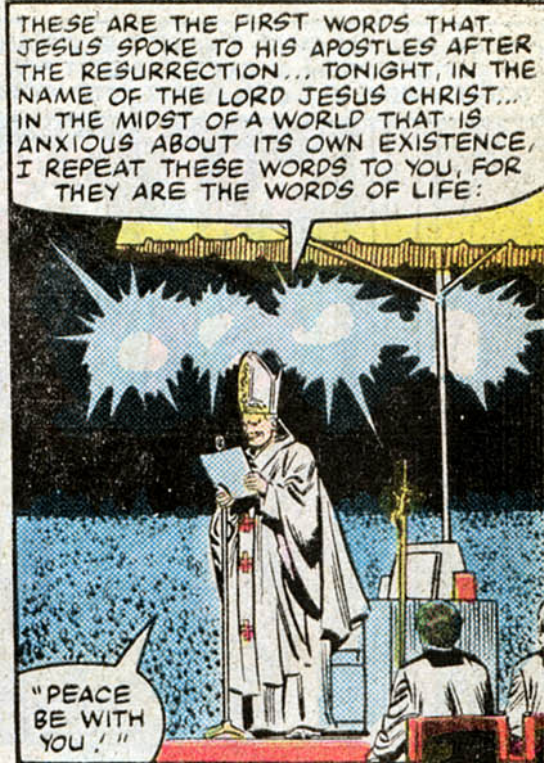
HOW CAN THEY LET HOODLUMS LIKE THAT IN HERE? THIS IS GOING TO BE A DISASTER!



"EPILOGUE--I AM WRONG IN THAT MOMENT OF DOUBT, I AM WRONG."

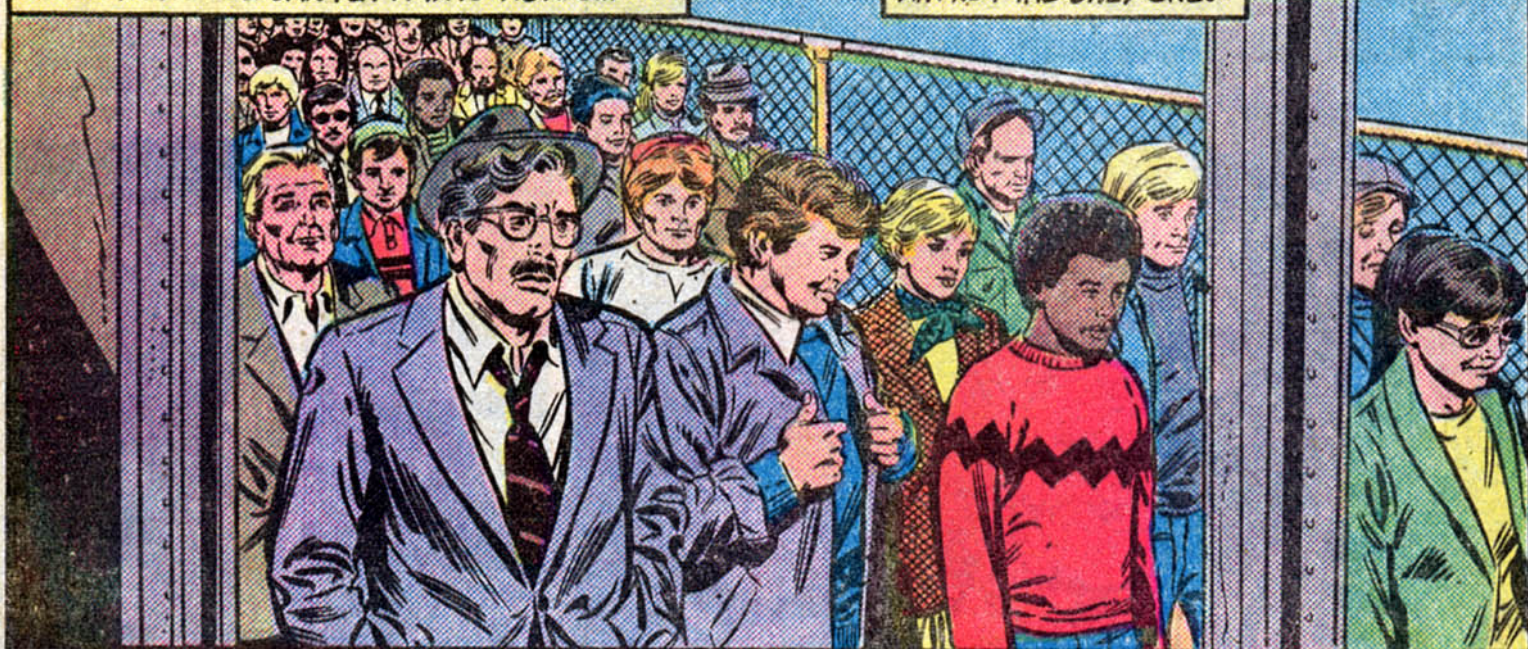
"SUDDENLY, HE IS THERE AND YOU CAN FEEL THE CONTAGIOUS EXCITEMENT CRACKLING THROUGH THE STANDS, AND THE SILENCE SPREADS LIKE A HUSHED WIND..."





"WHEN IT IS ALL OVER, I HAVE THE STRANGEST FEELING OF SATISFACTION. I CAN'T SHAKE IT FOR DAYS AND I DON'T KNOW IF I CAN PUT IT INTO WORDS..."

"ALL I CAN BE SURE OF IS THAT I HAVE EXPERIENCED *SOMETHING*... AND THAT I AM NOT THE *ONLY ONE*!"

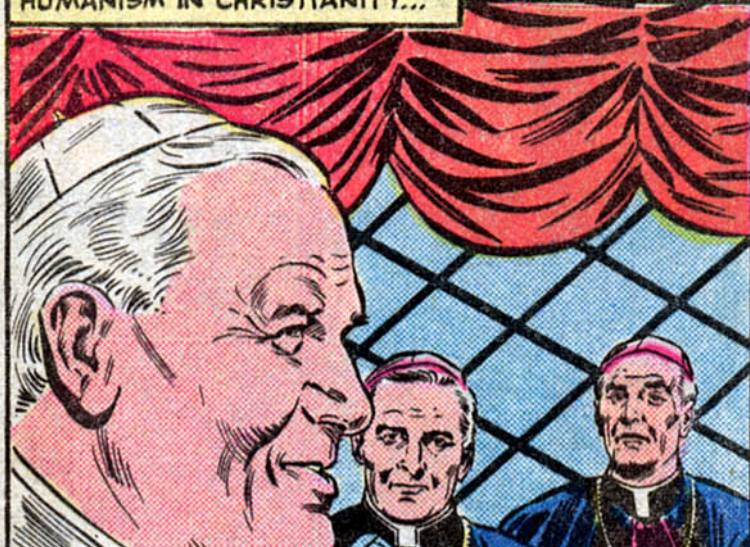


"THAT IS THE ONLY TIME I SEE POPE JOHN PAUL II. FROM THERE, HE GOES ON TO THE REST OF THE COUNTRY--AND LATER CONTINUES HIS TRAVELS..."

"TRAVELLING TO ZAIRE, HE SPEAKS OF BRINGING THEIR VARIETY OF CATHOLICISM INTO LINE WITH THE AFRICAN EXPERIENCE..."



"IN FRANCE, HE EMPHASIZES THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN THE PURPOSE OF RELIGION IN SECULAR LIFE, HOPING IN THAT WAY TO FIND THE FULFILLMENT OF HUMANISM IN CHRISTIANITY..."



"IN GERMANY, HE MAKES WHAT HE TERMS 'A PILGRIMAGE TO THE LAND OF LUTHER', DESCRIBING SIMILARITIES OF PRINCIPLES IN CATHOLICISM AND LUTHERANISM..."



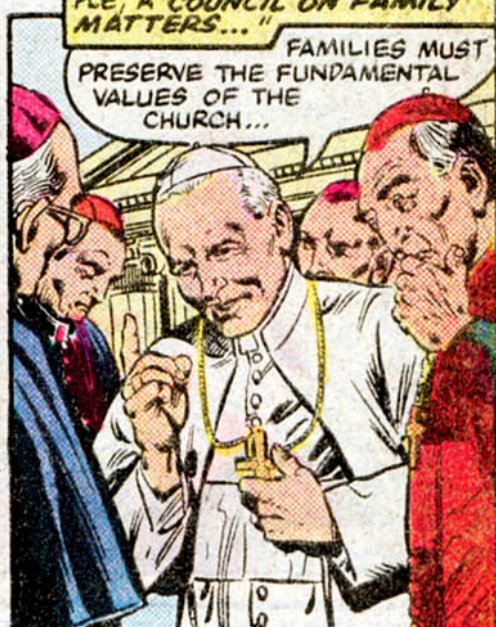
"IN BRAZIL, HE REPEATS THE MESSAGE HE GAVE TO MEXICO: ALL MEN HAVE INALIENABLE RIGHTS THAT EVEN THE MIGHTIEST OF MEN MUST NOT TREAD UPON..."



"IN TURKEY, POPE JOHN PAUL II PLEADS FOR ECUMENISM WITH THE EASTERN ORTHODOX CATHOLIC CHURCH--AND PRAISES ISLAM AND ITS MAJOR VIRTUES, SUCH AS ITS DOCTRINE OF THE ONE TRUE GOD..."



"AND, OF COURSE, DUTIES IN ROME OCCUPY MOST OF HIS TIME AND THOUGHT, AS HE STRUGGLES TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP IN AN UNSTABLE WORLD... FORMING, FOR EXAMPLE, A COUNCIL ON FAMILY MATTERS..."



FAMILIES MUST PRESERVE THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUES OF THE CHURCH...

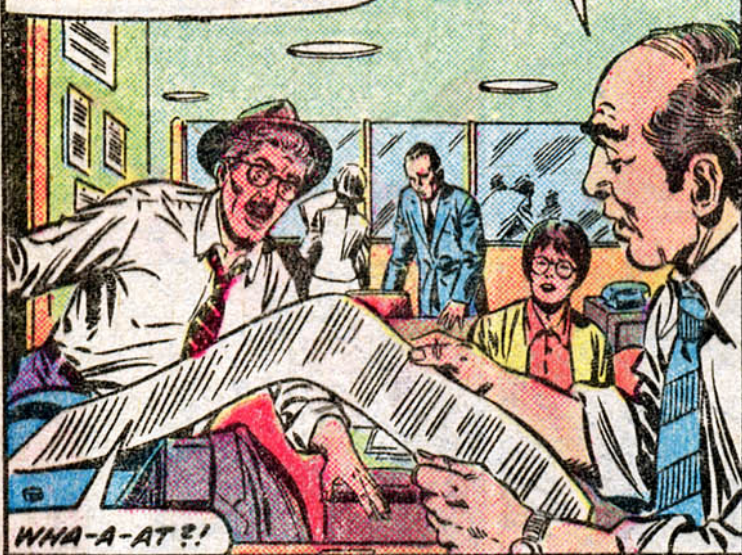
"THEN, ON MAY 13, 1981--"



"LIKE EVERY OTHER DAY, I GO TO THE PAPER THIS DAY. I WISH I HADN'T..."

HEY, GET THIS, THE POPE WAS SHOT IN ST. PETERS SQUARE TODAY WHILE HE WAS GREETING TOURISTS.

COUPLE OF AMERICAN WOMEN GOT HURT, TOO.



NO! IT CAN'T BE TRUE! WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO SHOOT HIM?!

SORRY! DIDN'T KNOW YOU WERE CATHOLIC!

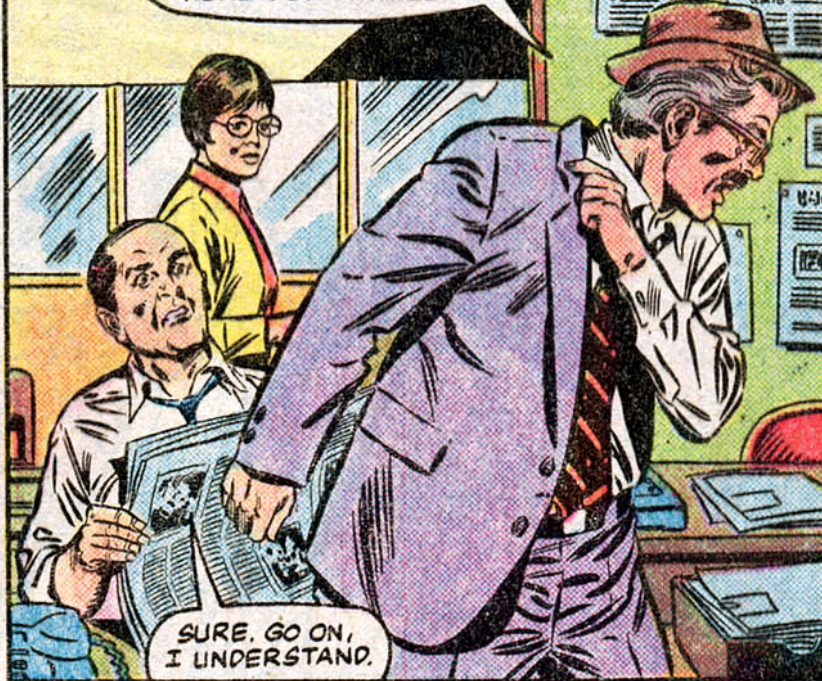


I NEVER SAID I WAS--AND THIS HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH RELIGION. POPE JOHN PAUL II IS A VOICE FOR JUSTICE AND WISDOM IN THE WORLD, A VOICE OF HOPE--

--AND THERE'S NOT SO MUCH HOPE IN THE WORLD THAT WE CAN AFFORD TO LOSE A SINGLE SOURCE OF IT.



I--I HAVE TO GET OUT OF HERE FOR AWHILE.



SURE. GO ON, I UNDERSTAND.

WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT?

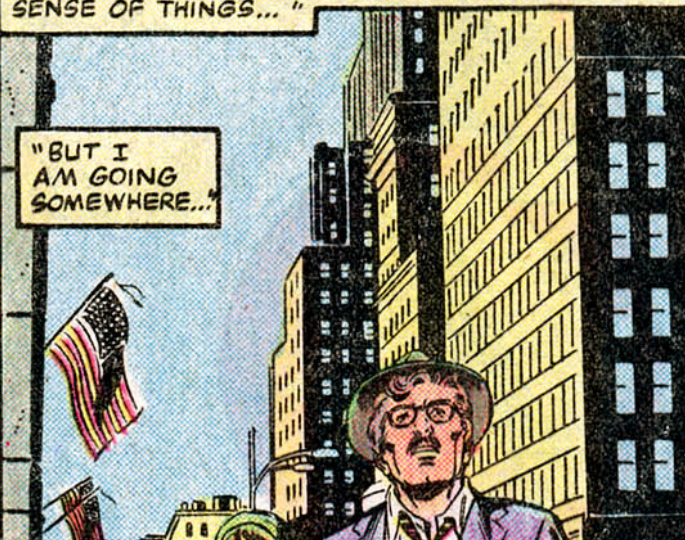
I'M NOT SURE...

... BUT WHATEVER IT WAS, I THINK HE WAS **RIGHT!**

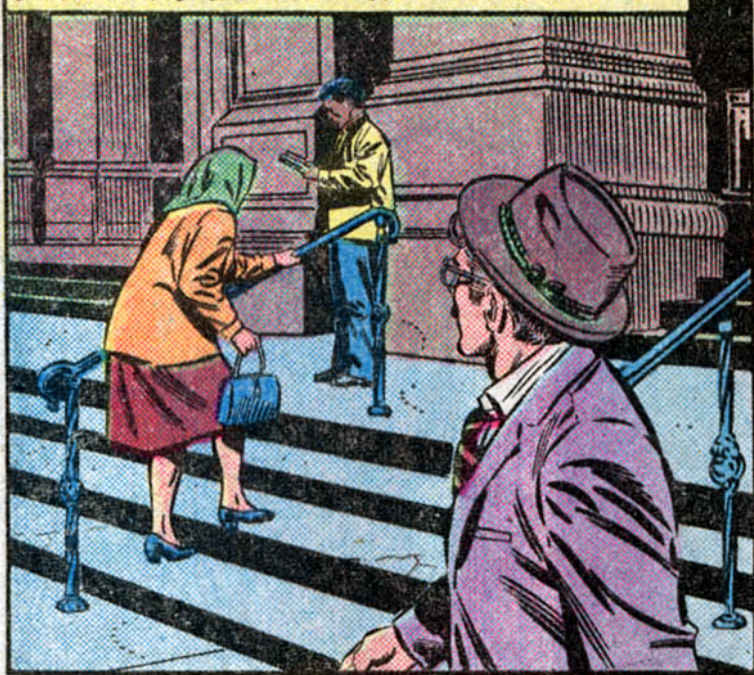


"I CAN'T SAY WHERE I AM GOING... I JUST WANT TO BE ALONE FOR AWHILE, TO MAKE SENSE OF THINGS..."

"BUT I AM GOING SOMEWHERE..."

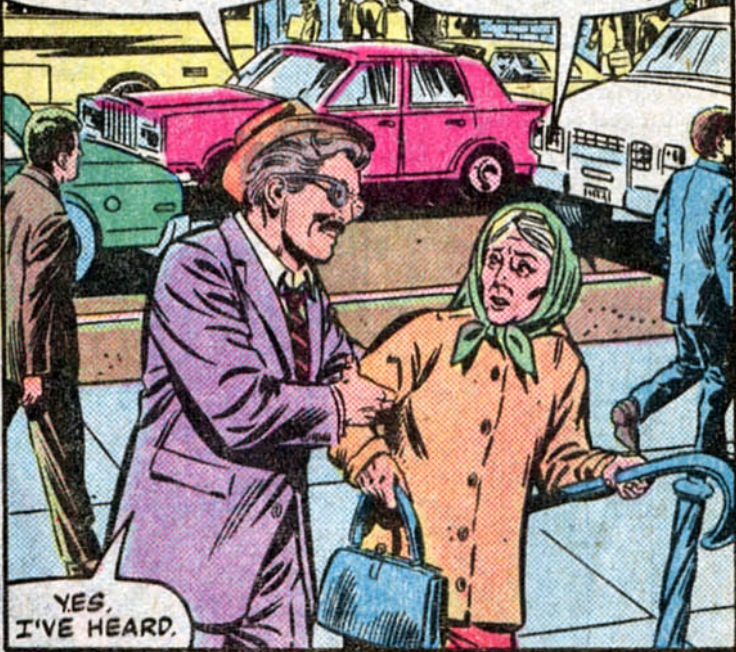


"ALMOST WITHOUT REALIZING IT, I AM THERE--
ST. PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL ON FIFTH AVENUE..."



EXCUSE ME... DO YOU
NEED HELP WITH THE
STEPS?

THANK YOU! ISN'T IT
HORRIBLE?! HAVE
YOU HEARD--?

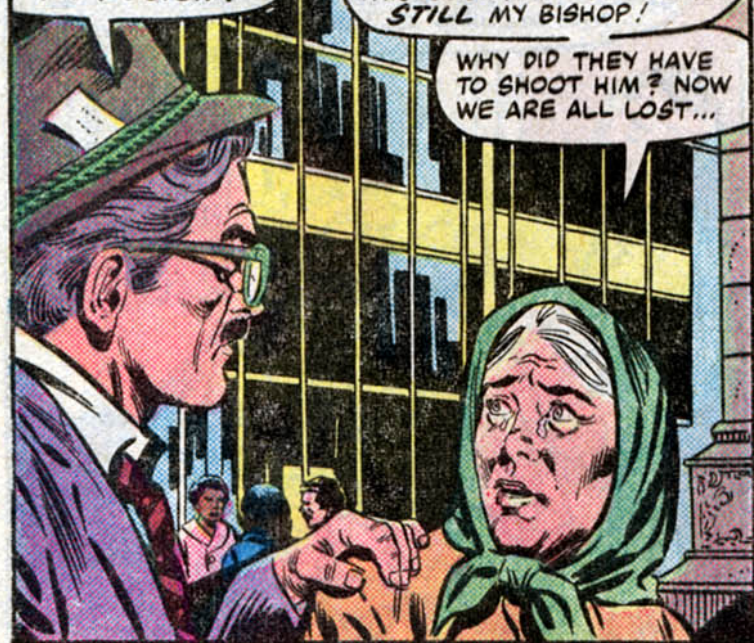


YES,
I'VE HEARD.

YOUR ACCENT--ARE
YOU POLISH?

A LONG TIME I'VE BEEN IN
THIS COUNTRY-- BUT HE IS
STILL MY BISHOP!

WHY DID THEY HAVE
TO SHOOT HIM? NOW
WE ARE ALL LOST...

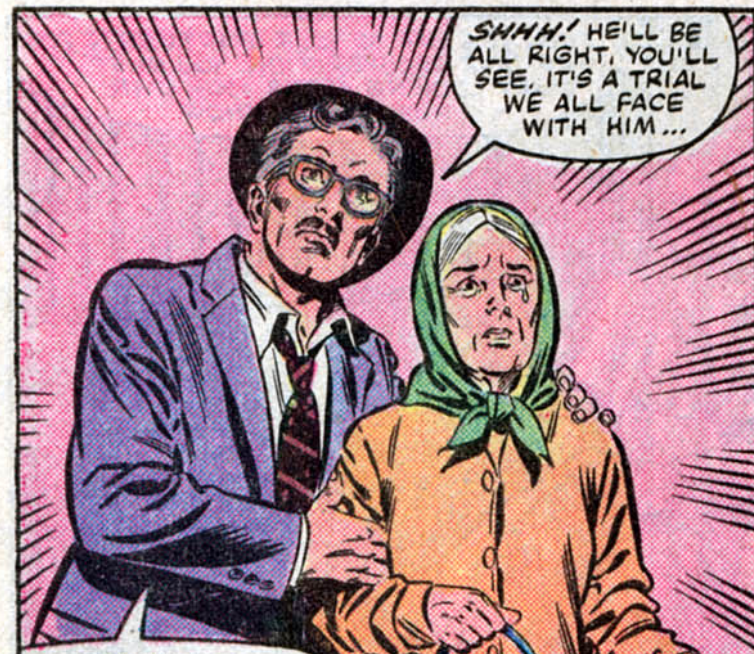


"I ALMOST AGREE WITH HER. HOPE HAS BEEN SLAIN,
IT SEEMS, AND ONLY DESPAIR IS LEFT. BUT I CAN'T...
SOMEHOW I JUST CAN'T."

"AND I REALIZE ...
HE WOULDN'T DESPAIR...
HE WOULD LOOK BEYOND
THE MOMENT, TO SEE
GOD'S HAND IN ALL
THINGS..."

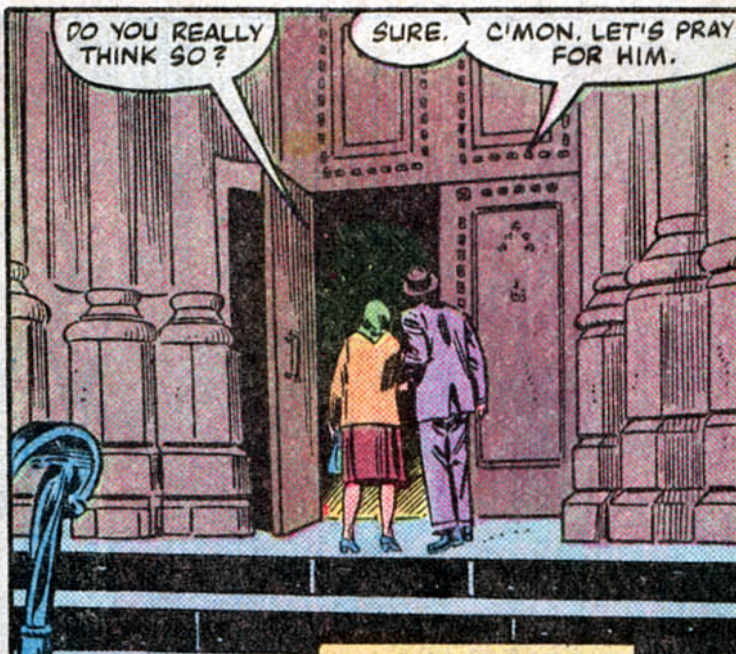


SHHH! HE'LL BE
ALL RIGHT, YOU'LL
SEE, IT'S A TRIAL
WE ALL FACE
WITH HIM...



DO YOU REALLY
THINK SO?

SURE. C'MON, LET'S PRAY
FOR HIM.



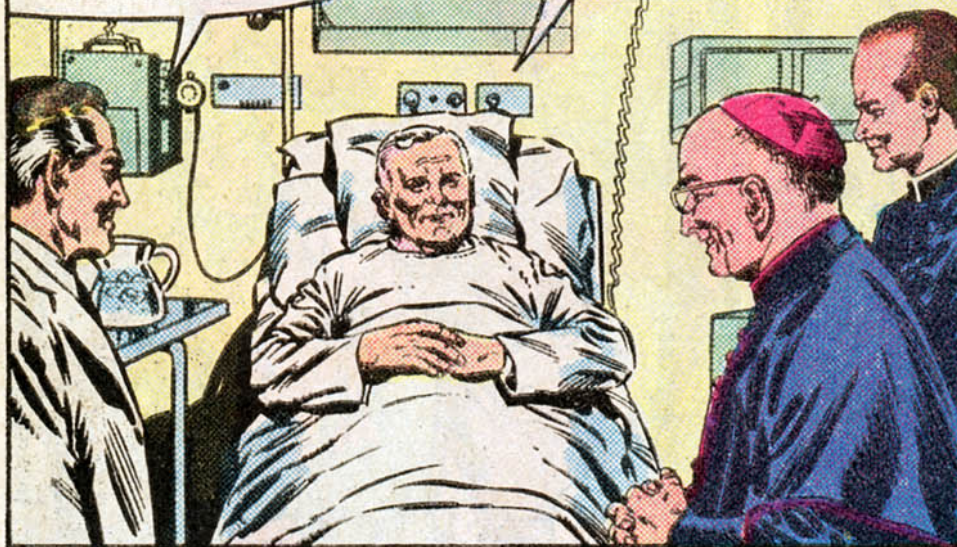
"HE MUST HAVE HEARD THIS ONE, THEN, BECAUSE HUNDREDS OF MILLIONS OF VOICES WERE SAYING THE SAME THING. MAYBE IT ISN'T A MIRACLE THAT POPE JOHN PAUL II RECOVERS, BUT IT SURE FEELS LIKE ONE..."

YOU KNOW... AFTER I WAS ELECTED, I VISITED A SICK FRIEND HERE. I SAID THEN I'D NEVER WANT TO BE STUCK HERE MYSELF.

... SO HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT YOUR ATTACKER?

I FORGIVE HIM. WHAT ELSE CAN I DO? I HAVE NOT THE HEART FOR MALICE!

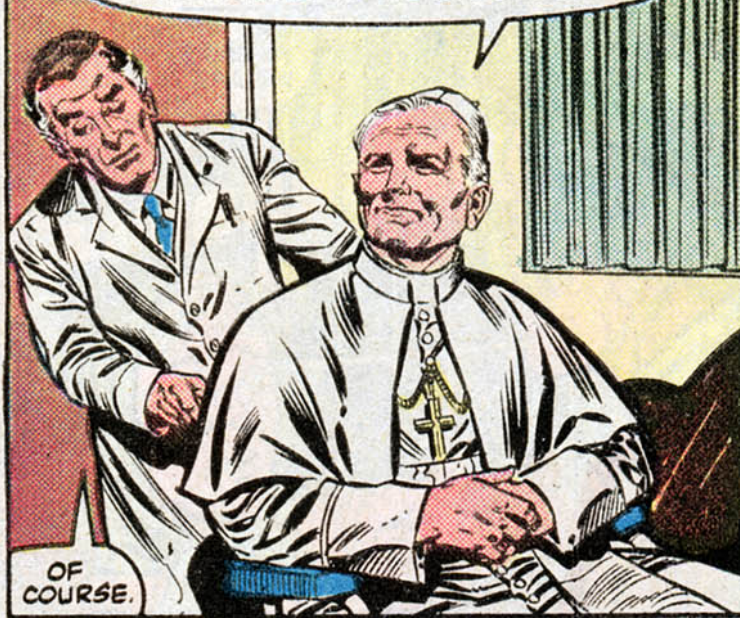
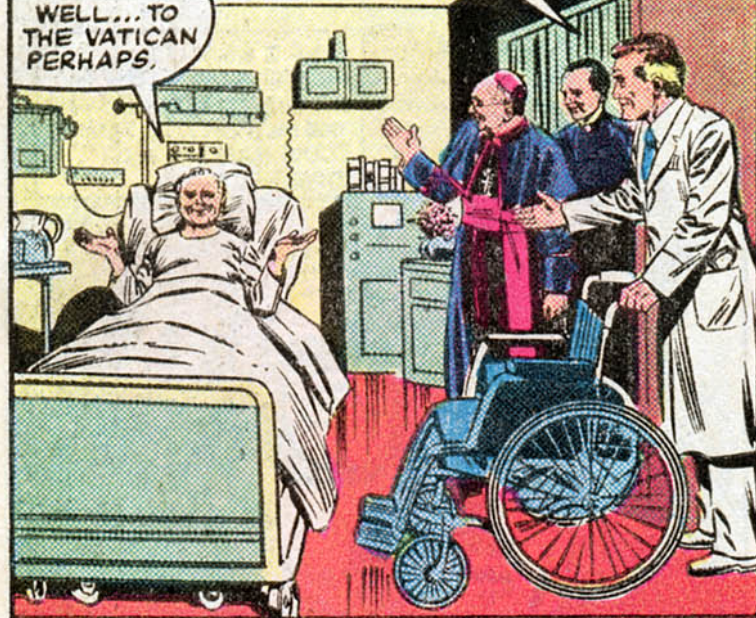
I'LL HAVE TO WATCH WHAT I SAY FROM NOW ON.



AH, MY STAR PATIENT. ARE YOU FEELING WELL ENOUGH TO GO HOME NOW?

WELL... TO THE VATICAN PERHAPS.

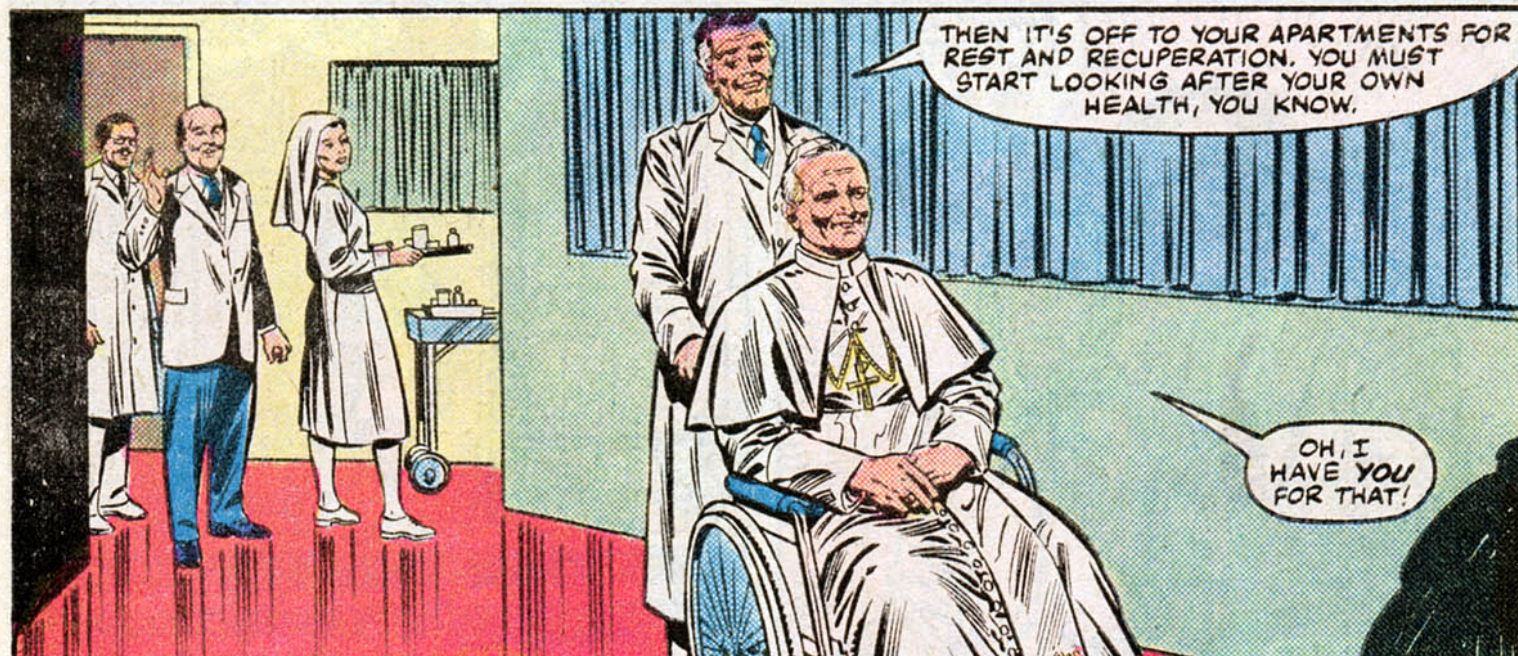
ONE REQUEST. MAY WE DETOUR BEFORE I LEAVE? I'D LIKE TO MEET THE WOMAN WHO WAS INJURED IN THE SHOOTING.

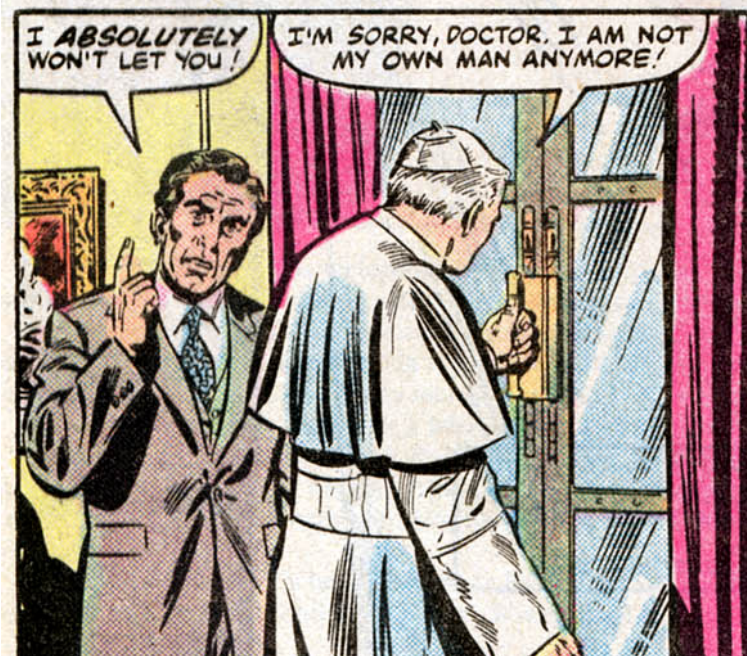
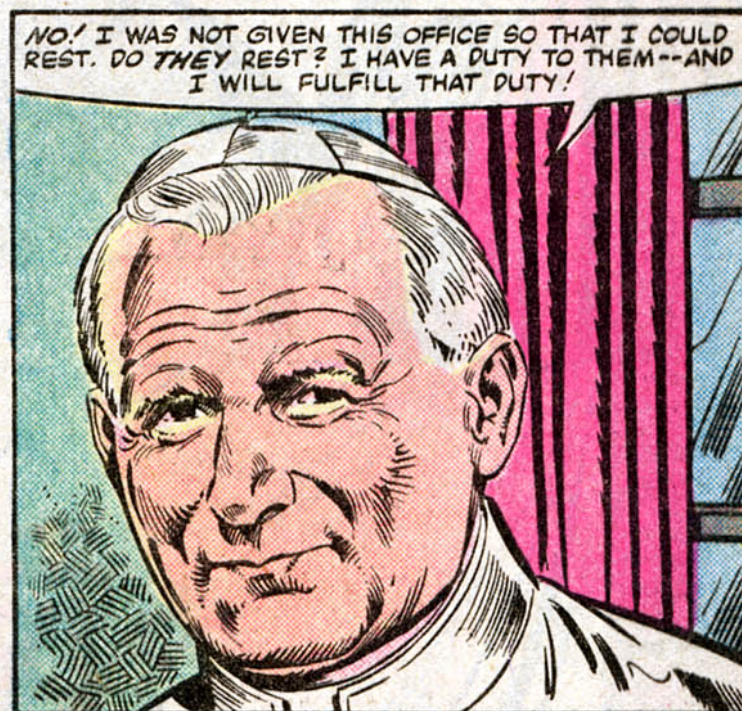
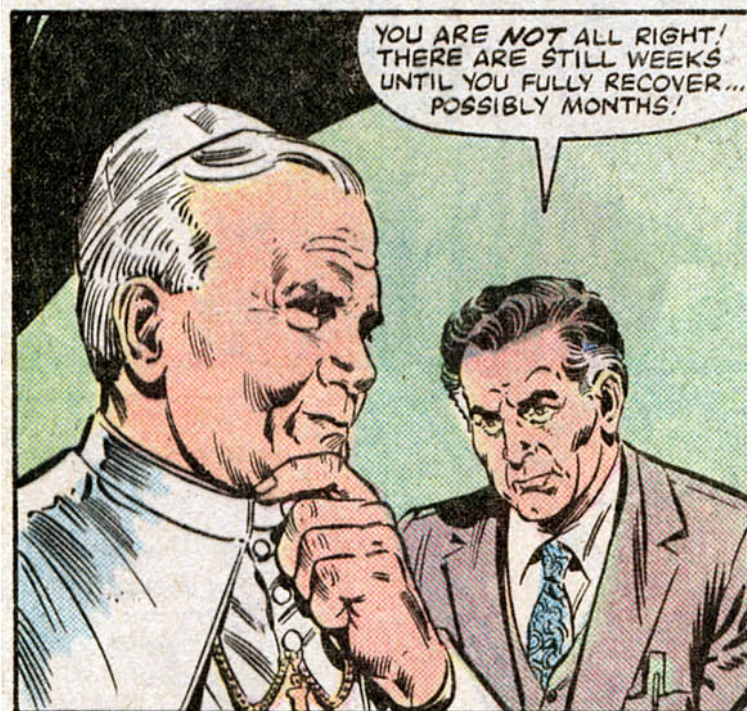
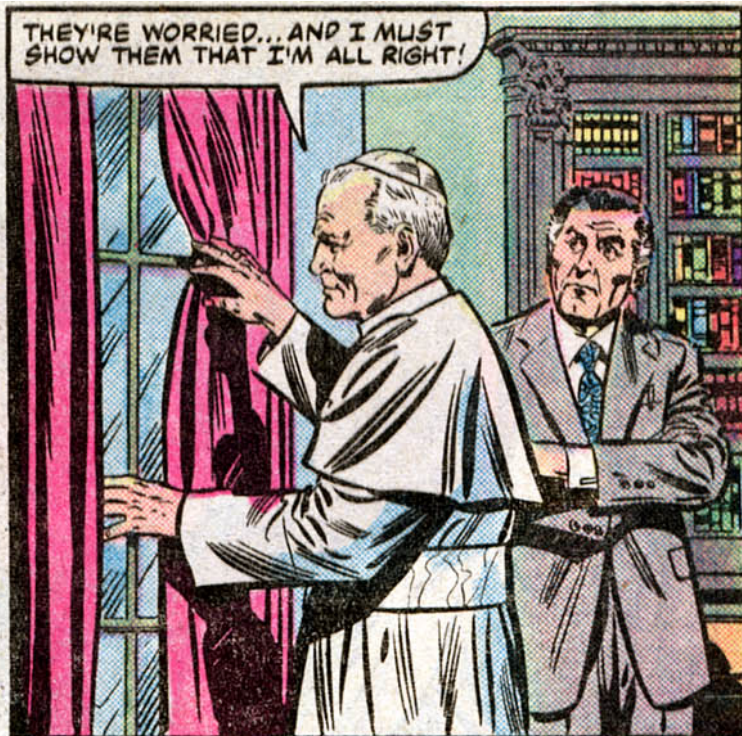
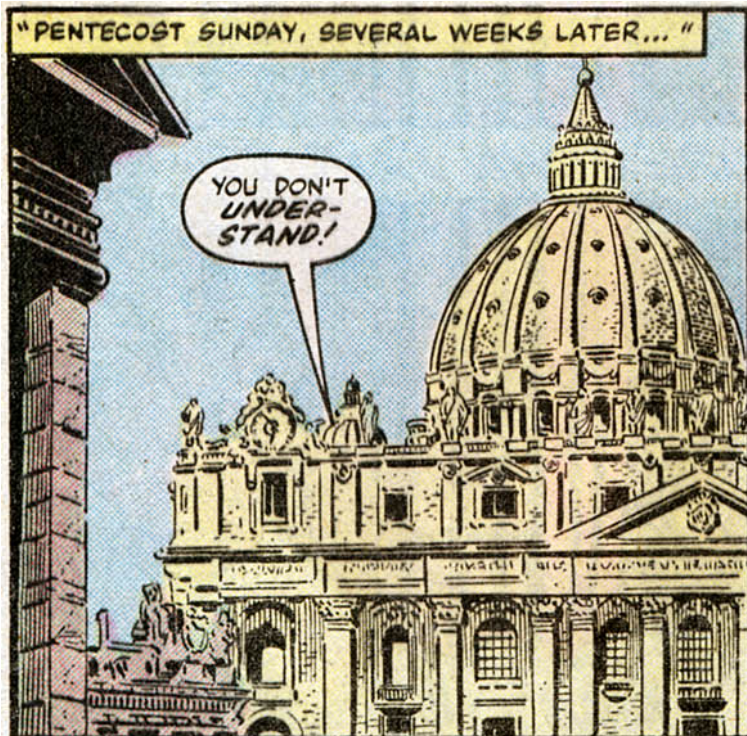


OF COURSE.

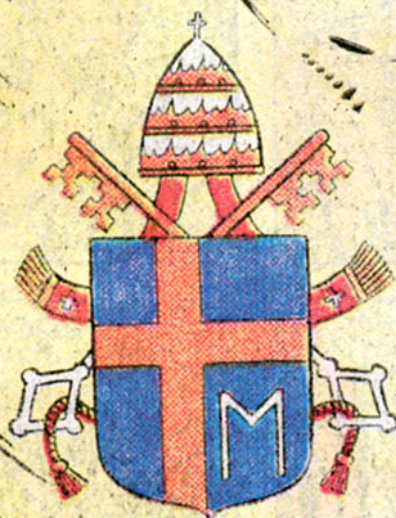
THEN IT'S OFF TO YOUR APARTMENTS FOR REST AND RECUPERATION. YOU MUST START LOOKING AFTER YOUR OWN HEALTH, YOU KNOW.

OH, I HAVE YOU FOR THAT!



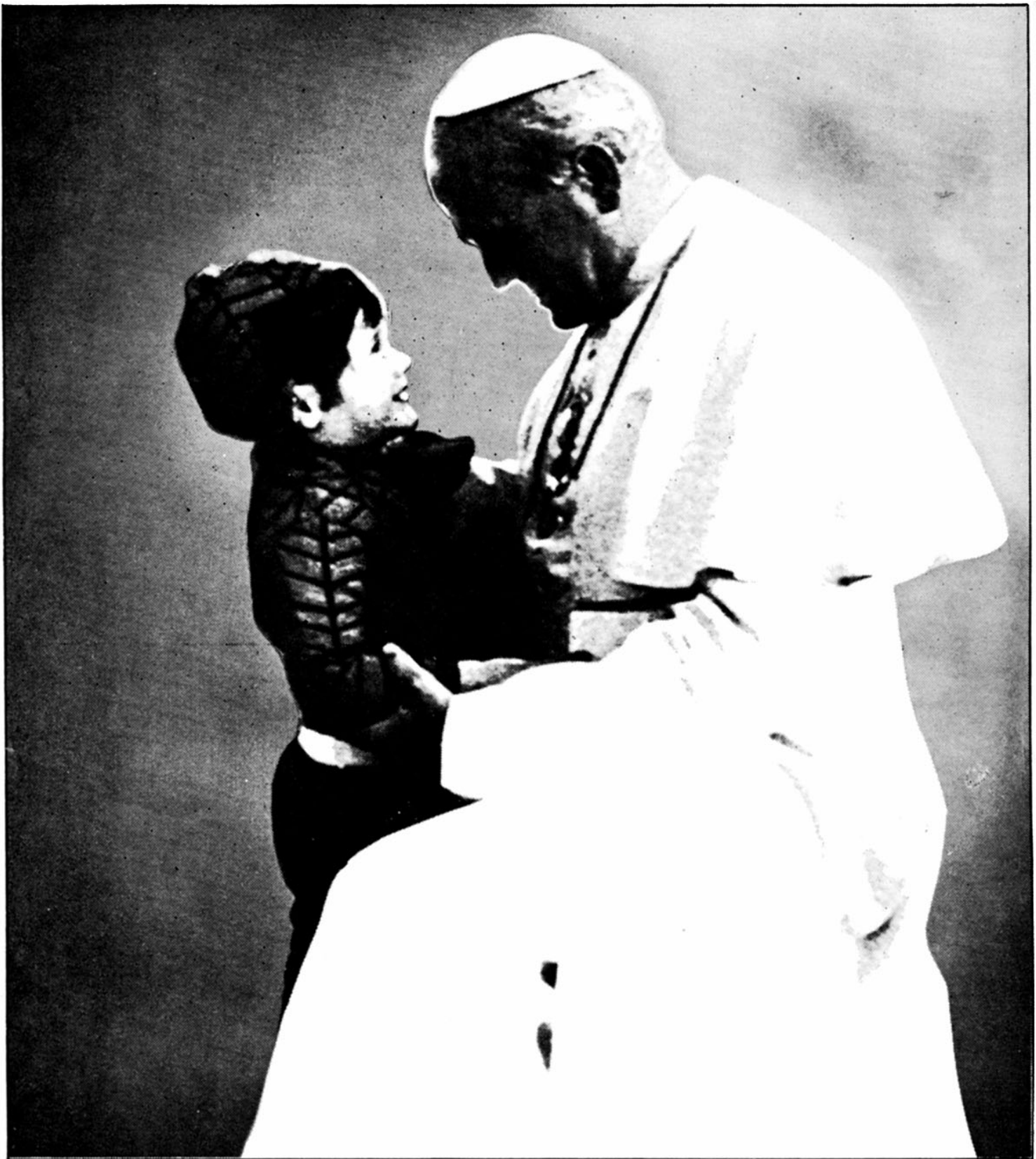


THIS IS POPE JOHN PAUL II.



"PETER, YOU ARE THE FLOOR, THAT OTHERS
MAY WALK OVER YOU (NOT KNOWING
WHERE THEY GO), YOU GUIDE THEIR STEPS..."

--KAROL WOJTYLA, 1962



Pope John Paul II is welcomed enthusiastically wherever he travels around the globe. His frequent trips have generated many exciting new projects for the Pontiff. Indeed, this very magazine came about as a result of the Pope's visit to Japan in February, 1981.

Father Julian is a Polish priest now serving at the Shibuya Catholic Church in Tokyo. He is also a close friend and neighbor of the Marvel Comics representative in Japan, Gene Pelc. Intrigued by Marvel's biography of St. Francis, *Francis, Brother of the Universe*, Fr. Julian passed copies of it to members of the Pope's entourage during the Tokyo visit.

An idea was soon hatched: a Marvel comic about the life story of Karol Jozef Wojtyla!

After conferring with the Pope, Fr. Julian arranged a meeting between Pelc and the Pope's chosen representative, Fr. Mieczyslaw Malinski — a lifelong friend of the Pope, and one of Europe's foremost religious writers. As someone who had lived with the Pope, gone to school with him, laughed and cried with him, only Fr. Malinski could provide the intimate details of the man, Karol Wojtyla.

Flying to Marvel's headquarters in New York City, Gene Pelc and Fr. Malinski met with Editor-in-Chief Jim Shooter, Writer Steven Grant and Artist John Tartaglione. With the aid of Lucy Mazareski (who helped interpret for Fr. Malinski), the ball was soon rolling.

Providing anecdotes, insights, history and bits of human interest gathered from his 40 odd years of close friendship with the Pope, Fr. Malinski related events that have never before been told to the general public in any medium. True insights and facts about Pope John Paul II are told for the first time in this Marvel magazine.

Production of this magazine was temporarily slowed when martial law was recently imposed in Poland and communications

